いつか黒き大魔のウサギ

鏡貴也

4

夜逃げの生徒会室

ファンタジア文庫

この国の絶望が減るように、
誰かが仕組みを弄っている。

「……いったい、あなたたちは
なにに絶望を感じるの？」

《聖地（リイル）》？？？

いつか天魔の黒ウサギ

4 夜逃げの生徒会室

「お前、ふざけんじゃねえ！」
《新米生徒会委員》鉄大兎・15分に7回
《最古の魔術師》サイトヒメア
「もう！　大兎を乱暴に扱って、私が許すと思っているの」

「鉄、お前もう一度殺されろ。それをケータイで撮影する」
《生徒会長》紅月光
「任務あるけど綺麗な蝶々に、こっちおいでよーって言われちゃったし」
《雷の末裔》安藤美雷

『時雨遥（しぐれはるか）は泣いている。
サイトヒメアも、
ガだお前を好きかもしれない。
キが前|力のない。
のお前が選べるのは「一人だ」

《封・解呪師（スペルブレイカー）》
セルジュ・エントリオ
ハスガ・エントリオ

生徒会の現在の状況

18歳以下の子供だけが行き来できる次元の裂け目——それを管理するために建てられた宮阪高校。しかし、その事実を知っているのは学校を管理する〈軍〉と、生徒会のメンバーだけだった。平凡な一般生徒だった鉄大兎は、ある事件をきっかけに強引に生徒会に入会させられるハメに。異世界の化け物や、ヒメアを狙ってくる〈天魔〉という謎の存在と闘ったりしながら、それなりに充実した毎日を送っていた。そんな中、幼なじみの遥が異世界の何者かにさらわれてしまう。大兎は生徒会の力も借りながら、遥を捜すのだが——

第十二代 宮阪高校生徒会

Prologue: School of << Bliss >>---

Afterschool time --- a term she hated.

It was a term that emitted an excessive feeling of peace and tranquility.

Even though the truth was that it was filled with despair and pain, the kids who knew nothing about it were passing the days, enjoying themselves.

Clear skies.

Classroom.

Desk.

Blackboard.

In the corridor where people were dispersing off, uninterrupted laughter from the students could be heard.

As she looked at that, she remembered.

As she looked at that, she remembered that day.

That guy.

The words said by << Philier Kurosu
M i l i t a r y >>in this place.

Suddenly,

"..... don't you find it strange?"

He said.

As always, he would start a conversation abruptly in that manner. He would start a conversation as and when he liked and end it as and when he

liked. There was no room to interject. It was always like that, whatever the topic was.

But I loved that. Kurosu would speak with a smile. Looking at me with an affectionate gaze, he would start talking.

That's why I smiled as well,

"About what?"

I asked.

And he nodded.

"This country has too little despair."

"Is that a problem?"

"At the very least, it's not fair right? On the other side of the ocean, people are dying everyday. Young girls get violated, and children who are not of age yet get sold off. But yet, do you know what the people of this country are worried about?"

"What, I wonder."

"Being bored everyday."

"Ahaha. Isn't it great to have peace of this sort?"

"Yeah. That's right. Peace is good. But what do you think this peace was built on? What do you think on earth was the peace built on in this distorted world?"

He said.

And he pointed at the sky. My eyes followed to where he was pointing to. I could still remember that the skies were clear on that day as well, and the sun shone brightly.

Different from human beings, I would lose my powers when I'm under the sun, and as I was looking up at the bright sun, I thought that maybe Kurosu was bullying me.

"What do you want to show me?"

On hearing my question, Kurosu replied.

"It's clear that someone is invoking a magic. It's thanks to someone's tampering that the despair of this country is reduced."

"Is that so? I can't feel it though."

Kurosu smiled again. And he said, "Because you are kind."

I recalled his smiling face from that time.

And then after that.

The incident which happened after that ---

At that moment, a scream was heard.

The scream brought her back to reality.

Right now, she was on top of the fence of the rooftop of the school.

At the highest point of the school which the humans had named as Miyasaka High.

She was standing there.

Her age seemed to be around eleven or twelve years old. But her face, seemingly bored with everything and anything, was emotionless. Her long straight black hair extended to her knees, and she wore clothes that resembled a kimono.

Fair skin, white like snow.

That white and black colors did not seem to match the backdrop of the school's rooftop during afterschool hours.

She turned her head around. Behind her, was a group of three young girls who had a tough aura around them, and they were dragging to the rooftop a short young girl by her hair.

The girl of small stature kept apologizing again and again.

During all that, the trio were laughing. Slapping the short girl's face, *this is not an issue of apologies*, they said and laughed.

It was not clear what had happened between them. Even though she didn't know what had happened, she knew that in the end, it would come to naught.

That applied to the young girl who was pinned to the ground with her hair being grabbed as well. To the laughing trio as well. To the clear skies as well. To the languid air of afterschool hours as well. There was no meaning to everything.

But it was a little annoying, she thought.

One of the young girls noticed her.

"Ah-reh, what's that?"

She muttered.

"A brat."

"But a very cute one though. Is she a foreigner? Though she's wearing a kimono. Hey you, it's dangerous over there ~. Don't fall off ~"

Following that, the young girl whose face was pressed against the floor started,

"Help, help me! Call the teachers, call the....."

"Shut up."

As she said that, the face of the bullied girl was struck again. And her face contorted in pain.

Tears and despair spread across her face.

Despair.

Despair.

Despair.

"Despair huh....."

She raised her eyebrows as she murmured.

And then, once again, she recalled something else.

It was an incident that had happened just recently at this school.

One fine day, a witch came to this school.

A witch called Saitohimea.

A witch of a different race from her.

And despair lay within her. It was a result of living in eternal solitude, having being continually betrayed, and on top of that, she was imprisoned somewhere during the past nine years.

But, she considered.

If that was called despair, then, it was something that was happening everywhere, isn't it?, she thought. Somewhere in the world, everyday, someone dies. Someone gets violated, tormented, killed, or forced into something unreasonable.

Then, what Saitohimea had experienced was not something that unique.

Then, what about Shigure Haruka?

Just as she was considering that,

"..... what manner of despair on earth are you people experiencing?"

She asked.

The young girls, on hearing that,

"Huh? What's that pipsqueak babbling about?"

"Hey hey, what's despair?"

"You don't even know that?"

"I'm not really good at studies."

"That's not the point right?"

"Save me. Please. These people are trying to kill....."

"Don't say that in such a distasteful manner. Do you really want us mash up your face?"

"Eeehhhh ~ that will really be bad ~. If you do something to my face, I'm going to tell on you, so don't do it."

"Even if we don't do that, you will still tattle on us."

"I won't! I....."

"Quiet!"

And that young girl beat up the other young girl.

A human beating up a human.

And she looked at them for a while, then murmured.

"Perhaps, Kurosu was right."

She murmured.

A magic had been cast on this country.

An abnormal power that was tampering with everything.

That was what she felt.

After Kurosu had disappeared, she had also begun to notice it.

A cheap form of despair, and a boring, quiet atmosphere which she feared would continue on for eternity.

Afterschool.

Chime.

Classroom.

Desk.

Blackboard.

Club activities.

Bullying.

And, what else?

Anyway, it was not unthinkable that everything in this country was backed by this special magic.

And Kurosu.

"..... I think I finally understood why he built this school above me."

She murmured.

And she raised her hand. *Stand down. You eyesores, please disappear*, she murmured. And all that had happened on the rooftop ended.

Each and every one of the young girls lost their memories of what took place here and were sent to outside of the school.

But she knew that even if she did that, nothing would change.

Even if they had lost their memories, they would probably go back to bullying someone else the next day. Beating someone else, probably. Hurting someone else, probably. The one who got bullied might even commit suicide.

Just as she thought, that was really meaningless.

Since this is a gentle country in which one could even die just from a broken romantic relationship.

But, that was clearly.....

"..... ah."

At that moment, once again, something irregular occurred.

She could feel a student of this school being taken outside of the school --- no, rather, outside of this world.

A girl by the name of Shigure Haruka was taken to another world.

But, no one had yet noticed it.

Even the protector of this school, that student council president.

"..... stupid Gekkou. Do I have to wipe his ass again.....?"

While saying that, she smiled, and closed her eyes.

"In order to help the blockhead humans notice Shigure Haruka, I'll attach an Anchor Mark."

She murmured.

And she attached a mark to Shigure Haruka.

If she was lucky, someone would notice that anchor.

If not, that's the end.

Shigure Haruka would disappear.

And when that happened, nothing would change indeed.

A girl getting violated and killed in front of her parents, or parents getting slain in front of their children, how many thousands, or how many tens of thousands of human beings, were spilling guts and spreading hatred across the great land in the name of war.

Nothing had changed.

Nothing had changed.

Then, what kind of << **Despair** >> and what kind of << **Bliss** >> should one feel?

The mad Saitohimea wanted to create the magic called << **Bliss** >>.

Bliss.

Bliss.

Bliss.

However, that word on 'Happiness'; the more she shouted it, the sadder her smile, which had surfaced at the corner of her lips, became as the word reverberated back unto her, and following that,

"....."

She disappeared.

Chapter 1 - Travelling to Outside of Human World

Clear sky.

Classroom.

Desk.

Blackboard.

And the chime that starts the morning rang within the school premises.

It was 8.40.

It was the signal to the start of the very first class of today.

Even so, for a brief period, one could hear the sounds of students taking their seats, sounds of students retrieving forgotten things from their lockers, greetings to the teachers who had arrived, and before long, the school returned to silence all at once, making it seem like the commotion earlier was but a lie.

The calm atmosphere that seemed like hell to the students who had stayed up late the night before ruled the world.

The only sounds audible were the writing of chalk and the bored voices of the teachers.

In the corridor of the school that seemed to be abnormally quiet,

"Guwaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa, this is really terrible aaaaaaahhhhhhh!"

Kurogane Taito hollered as he ran.

Running at full speed. Running as if he was going to die. Rather, in reality, he died in the midst of running. Even when he had died, he kept on running.

With light brown hair, and wearing the uniform of Miyasaka High. With a medium, toned build as a result of doing karate up till middle school.

As a freshman of this Miyasaka High, of course, he should have been attending lessons in the classroom but,

"Aaaaaaaahhhh crap! Seriously crap! If I die one more time..... one more time, I won't be able to come back to life anymore!"

He ran while shouting something incomprehensible. Running desperately.

And his body was covered in red flames. The flames fried his hair, burned his clothes, and melted his skin. While his skin had melted in entirety, thanks to his --- "can't die unless he dies seven times" --- bizarre ability, they had started to regenerate, however, there was a limit to that. Since the fire had yet to be extinguished, even if his body had regenerated, it started catching fire again, and his body had already caught fire for around four, five times.

That's why,

"I-If I don't quickly put out the fire, I'll really die!"

While getting burned by a fire from head to toe, he ran in an ordinary corridor of the school.

With that, he dashed into the toilet. He turned the tap on to full blast and put his head under,

"Am I not just putting out the fire on my head!"

Yelled Taito.

With that, as he put his right arm under the running water, he turned around. Beside the cubicle that was twice as large as a normal one, was a receptacle where cleaner tools were placed in,

"Bucket!"

He shouted.

He opened up the receptacle and took out the bucket. He then placed it below the running tap,

"Quickly quickly quickly quickly fill up dummy!"

He yelled at no one in particular. After it was about half-filled, he poured it over himself. Upon doing that, the flames on his upper body were more or less doused. At the same time, his burnt skin, hair, and clothes started regenerating quickly.

Looking at that,

"Alright ~! One more time to put out everything!"

He then put the bucket under the tap again. His lower body was still burning but he was no longer bothered by it.

He probably wouldn't die anymore with this level of fire, and besides, perhaps as a result of the fire being doused out from his upper body, his regeneration speed had started accelerating.

That's why, he waited for the bucket to fill up completely so as to be able to completely extinguish the fire with just one more round.

"....."

He stared intently for a while at the bucket that was filling up from the tap. As he looked at the bucket fill up, and was about to pour it over his head, at that instant.

"H-Hey you, what in the world are you doing?"

A voice called out from the entrance of the toilet.

"Eh?"

Taito turned to face the entrance.

There, was a girl who was wearing the sailor uniform of Miyasaka High. Rather, he knew that face. With short hair that was dyed blond, and a skirt that was short to the limits of what was acceptable.

If he recalled correctly, she is a girl from class five that's two classrooms away from his. Her name is Aomi Izumi. It was rumored that she had been mixing around with delinquents from other schools, and she has high academic ability, and even in the class five which is filled with serious kids, she is a notch above them.

That delinquent Aomi, with her eyes that were full of makeup, was looking intently at Taito, and he frantically said,

"Ah ~, ermm, you are Aomi right? What are you doing here as well? The first period has started right?"

Upon saying that, she showed him the thing that she was holding tightly in her hand. It was a cigarette.

"Ah ~"

Taito nodded.

Aomi then stared at him,

"So now, it's your turn to answer my question. What are you doing here?"

"Eh? Me?"

"Yeah."

"I, I, erm ~, am using the toilet though."

"Using the ladies?"

"Eh? This is the ladies?"

Taito raised his voice unconsciously and looked around him. Indeed, it was not the 'Gents' sign on the door, and, *aah, this is terrible, really terrible*, he thought.

If I don't, if I don't make a good excuse, I'm going to be regarded as a pervert throughout the school, he thought, while on the other hand,

"....."

Little by little, he could feel a pain coming from his lower body. The remnants of the fire which should have been more or less extinguished thanks to the water, was slowly building up again, bit by bit, and Taito looked down at it. Upon turning his attention to the fire that was burning his skin underneath his pants,

"Ah! There's a teacher behind you!"

He yelled.

"Woah, seriously?"

Aomi shouted and turned around.

Using that chance, he stealthily poured the filled up bucket on himself once again. Even though he was doing it stealthily, *splash*, a loud splashing noise was heard.

On hearing that, Aomi turned to face him, and with eyes that seemed to indicate that she was looking at a pervert, she stared at the drenched Taito,

"..... somehow, all this while, your pervertedness level has been so high that I don't know what you are planning to do huh?"

She said something most outrageous.

Taito nodded to that,

"Yeah, seems so, isn't it ~"

He replied.

"What are you doing?"

"Well, I can't explain it in a sentence, but a lot happened."

"Did you get bullied?"

"Bullied? Ah ~, yeah. We'll go with that."

Upon saying that, Taito attempted to pass Aomi from her side and exit the toilet but, his shoulder got grabbed from behind,

"Hey wait. After coming to the woman's toilet and messing around, do you think you can just leave without some explanation?"

She told him.

On hearing that, Taito's face scowled with annoyance,

"I'll keep quiet about the cigarette, so you'll also keep quiet about me, how's that?"

Aomi smiled at that.

"Orh ~, you are threatening me first?"

"....."

"Do you know what I'm called in class? Yankee girl. Even though I was thinking that may be a little outdated..... but anyway, you think such a person will become bothered if she was caught smoking?"

"....."

"Now now, let's hear your explanation, shall we? What the hell are you doing here? Don't keep fun things to yourself."

On hearing that, Taito looked at the excited looking Aomi and said.

"It's nothing something of the fun sort."

"C'mon, don't kid me. Coming to a woman's toilet to pour water on yourself, it must be something fun."

"No, it's not. I gotta go already."

Taito exited the toilet.

Upon doing that, from behind him,

"Even if you feign ignorance, I'm going to find out you know ~? Doing karate until middle school, and right now an executive member of the student council, Kurogane Taito-kun."

She told him.

She told him about his profile before he had come to Miyasaka High, and upon hearing that, Taito turned around with a look of surprise on his face.

In the corridor of the school, she then lit up the cigarette in her hand, put it into her mouth, and smiled happily.

"Ah, you really are involved in student council work. I thought so ~. The student council of this school is kinda strange right. The student council executive members still get their credits even if they don't attend classes right? I'm kind of envious."

Taito shrugged at her words.

"There's really nothing to be envious about though."

"Really?"

"Yeah."

"But I want to get into the student council though. Won't you recommend me to the president? Or else, everyone will get to know about the burning man running in the corridor, you know?"

"Hey, you saw everything right from the beginning?"

Taito groaned. Following that, he sighed out softly. Right now, he really didn't have time to engage in idle talk with a normal high school girl. He had to quickly deal with a situation which was much more terrible than this.

"....."

At that moment, as he recalled that Aomi Izumi is just a normal human for an instant, he couldn't help but smile wryly at himself.

As he recalled how he was the same ordinary human being as Aomi just some time ago, he couldn't help but smile wryly at himself.

That was how bizarre the things that had been happening around him recently were. Because they were so exasperating to the point of making him weary.

That's why, Taito looked intently at the delinquent-looking Aomi Izumi but yet who belongs to the normal human world,

"Ok, I got it."

He said.

"I'll tell that to Gekkou. That there's someone who wants to get into the student council."

Aomi's face lit up upon hearing that.

"Really!?"

"Yeah."

"You'll definitely will do it right?"

"Yeah. But, about that right? In exchange, about the matter of me burning up....."

At that moment, while chewing on the cigarette in her mouth, Aomi held out a finger to reassure him.

"It's alright. I'll keep mum."

Taito nodded.

"Right, then, I'm busy today, so see ya."

On saying that, he turned on his heel.

Then, from behind him, Aomi said.

"I'll be waiting for your invitation ok ~"

Taito then waved back.

And he thought. That student council president --- that stuck up high-handed Kurenai Gekkou will definitely say this to Taito, who had been

running along the corridor while burning up and getting seen by an ordinary student,

"Why are you always giving me trouble? Small fry. Trash. Scum."

While saying that, he will quickly proceed to erase the memory of Aomi.

That's why, in the end, nobody would have seen anything here.

The first period of lessons had started, and a normal, ordinary day resumed.

And the place that Taito was now heading to ---

"....."

He walked for a while along the corridor, and once again returned to the student council room. He poked his head out of the student council room once, and made sure that no one was following him. Following that, he nodded and closed the door, and then turned to face the inside of the student council room. The student council room looked the way it looks like everyday.

The student council room in the corner of the fifth floor of the central premises of Miyasaka High.

Inside the room were a document shelf and a whiteboard. An oblong meeting table, and a tea set which Gekkou drinks tea from.

It was a really normal looking student council room.

There was no one in the room right now. Everyone was out busy with their 'work', and the only one who had come back to the student council room was Taito.

And once again, Taito had to go perform his 'work'.

The 'work' that the entire twelfth student council was engaged in full force right now.

"....."

Taito looked intently at a strange hole that was on the white wall of the student council room.

On the other side of that hole, a green grassland spread ---

"....."

Wait, that alone was something bizarre.

What on earth was a grassland doing on the other side of an open hole on the wall of the student council room of a normal school? Even right now, Taito had that thought, but, somehow, this seems to be such a place.

Just like what Aomi said earlier, this student council is kind of strange.

This was a unique place that could connect to every possible strange world, dimension, and place, by means of a << **Way** >>.

Even though Taito didn't know the details, but, this is a place known as the << **Holy Ground** >>, a place possessing a special **power**, and because of how convenient this power can be, an organization known as the << **Military** >>, had taken on the role of managing it and had built a school on top of it for the purpose of camouflaging it from other countries.

The reason behind why a school was used, was because the only ones who can travel by << **Ways** >> via the << **Holy Ground** >> are children who are eighteen and below, and as such, they had decided to make use of children to manage this **power**, thus the student council became the one to manage this location.

Of course, this power has been kept a secret from other students and teachers, and they are also unaware of the fact that the organization known as the << **Military** >> is using this school as a testing ground.

"Well, they say ignorance is bliss."

Taito muttered to himself.

He had also not known about this until some weeks ago.

He had never known that the school he goes to, has an open dimensional portal daily to other worlds in order to acquire powerful weapons or things of that sort, and while doing that ran the risk of having demons or monsters invading from the other side and annihilating all the students of the school as a result.

In spite of that, before he knew it, he was embroiled into this unknown, crazy world.

On top of that, his childhood friend, his closest friend, had been abducted by some monster residing in another dimension.

And right now, in order to save her, the whole student council was in the midst of desperately carrying out attacks on the world where the monster lives.

He took out his cellphone from his pocket. Flipped open it. And ascertained the time displayed on the screen.

The time was 8.51.

The time when he was first blown off and killed by the flames of a monster from the other world was probably around 8.39, and thus in another three minutes, fifteen minutes would have passed since he first died. When that happens, his power will return.

His conditional immortality power where he won't truly die unless he dies seven times within an interval of fifteen minutes.

And thus, while looking intently at his cellphone, he murmured by himself.

"..... to wait for three minutes without doing anything, it's kind of long huh."

While he said that, the time ticked away.

"It's like waiting for my cup noodles to be ready. That's kind of tough."

The time continued ticking.

Just one minute until his regeneration power returns to its original state. Therefore, he looked at the rift on the wall once again. As to what kind of world was beyond the rift, right now, he had yet to find out. The only thing he knew was that something in that world had taken Taito's childhood friend, Shigure Haruka, away, and had imprisoned her, according to Himea who had found that out using her magic.

With regards to that, Himea had said.

"Since the whereabouts of Haruka-chan had been marked with an ostentatious anchor, this could be a trap."

Even though she had said something like that, for now, Taito had no idea what it meant.

However, in any case, Haruka had been abducted into that foreign world, and without a minute to lose, they need to rescue her as soon as they can.

Then.

"..... it's fifteen minutes."

Murmured Taito. His immortality powers had returned. Following that,

"Now. Let's go fight another round."

Upon saying that, he started forward. Into another world on the other side of the rift.

The rest of the student council members were on the other side of the rift, investigating the other world as well.

The student council president Kurenai Gekkou was at the north side of the portal.

His subordinate demon, Andou Mirai was in the east.

The << Most Ancient Sorcerer >> Vampire who had conferred Taito with his powers of immortality, Saito Himea was in the west.

And as for Taito.

"....."

He passed through the portal from the student council room into the other world. With that, he turned to face the southern side which was entrusted to him.

What he saw was, as expected, a normal grassland.

Under the strong rays of the sun, and bright, clear sky. The glittering grassland that seemed to extend into every direction. It was like the fantasy scenery that was often found in manga or RPGs. If a chariot ran past, he would have been completely taken in by it.

In other words, it didn't give off any feel of modernness, and if he were to go the rural town of Spain or a country like that, won't it be something resembling this? That was how normal looking the scenery was, to the point of giving him a false sense of normality.

"Well, as a student living in Tokyo, this isn't something I've seen before."

While muttering that, when he just came to this place initially, Taito had held no signs of anxiety and had started walking on the grassland.

Then, fear had come assaulting the tensionless Taito.

"Hey, this isn't really normal right?"

He had walked southwards while saying that, and from where he was, a few hundred meters ahead of him, a large, red lizard the size of a Koujien was standing on the grass.

Its red eyes looked at him.

Taito murmured, "Woah, what a large lizard".

The lizard opened its serrated mouth.

"Crap, is it going to bite me!?" Taito had said as he was backing away.

However, what had happened next was not the biting attack he had expected. Instead, from the mouth of the lizard, spewed flames. The scale of the flames were like what he had seen in anime, where dragons go *Buwah* as they spewed large breaths of flames.

And so, because of that, Taito's upper body got turned into ashes, but because of his immortality powers, he regenerated, however, because the flames were not extinguished, he kept dying, and *gyaaaaaaaaaaa*, *I'll die seven times in a blink! I'm going to die seven times!*, he kept crying out again and again as he escaped to the toilet in the school --- and this was what had happened earlier.

And right now, it was his second play at this 'investigation game'.

"..... if such monsters are all over the place, then this is already a 'death game'."

Taito murmured with a distasteful face.

By the way, 'death games' are like, you know, those games. Those games with unreasonable developments, where you keep dying over and over again, and have to remember how things unfold in order to proceed, in other words, the so-called crap games.

"But well, in real life, the danger is usually closer to the crap games right. Even to the extent of suddenly getting knocked down by a truck. But then again, a lizard shouldn't breathe fire right?"

Upon saying that, he turned around.

"But, if this place is so crazy, will Himea be ok?"

He started getting a little worried.

But then again, all the rest of the student council members are stronger than him, and he might very well be the greatest worry to them all.

Well, since he already knew how dangerous this place can be, he won't get killed so easily the next time round, he thought.

"The next time I see that lizard again, I'm going to quickly kick its ass."

While saying that, he started walking again. Acting more cautiously than before, he tensed up his body in preparation for any kind of battle as he advanced across the grassland.

He passed by the place where he had previously encountered the lizard, and proceeded beyond that.

Further beyond that.

As he proceeded further, *gasagasa*, he could hear the rustling sounds from the swaying grass on the grassland.

He stopped moving. And turned his eyes to the source of the sound.

There, stood a young woman.

With fine golden hair up till knee length. Fair white skin. Blue eyes. Wearing some kind of tribal clothes. In her hands was a bow.

If we use a game as an analogy, she is either of a shaman class or a hunter class.

But, at any rate, she looked like a human. Like a beautiful Russian girl.

Taito said to the beautiful young woman,

"Ah ~, do you understand Japanese?"

He tried saying something stupid.

The young woman replied. Glaring at him with menacing eyes, her mouth opened,

"＋×／・・・*＋＝∽∽∽"

And said something. But he didn't understand it. Clearly, they were not words that he had heard before. Rather, they were clearly not sounds that he had heard before. High pitched sounds that could send his ears ringing, to put it more accurately, they were sounds that seemed to be inaudible to humans.

In response to that,

"Ah, as I thought, she's not human."

Taito said, and as he said that, the young woman was already aiming her bow at him.

"Woah woah woah, on top of that, she's not friendly huh. But, since she looks like a human, I can't attack....."

But his words stopped there.

The beautiful young woman shouted something, and two horns grew from her forehead. Then, in the center, between those two horns, a ball of light was born, and in the center of that ball, appeared the same lizard that had breathed fire on him earlier. That lizard breathed fire. Upon doing that, the flames conferred the tip of the arrow of the young woman with power and with the arrow aimed at Taito,

"Shit!"

She released it!

Taito quickly jumped to the side to dodge. The arrow, which missed its target, pierced into the grassland behind him and, *gaaaaaaaaah*, a loud exploding noise, like that of dynamite, was heard, and a large gaping hole opened in the ground.

Taito could only look at it in a dumbfounded manner,

"..... hey hey, is this a joke?"

In the time he was muttering that, the young woman was already starting to notch her second arrow into the bow. As she chanted something like a spell, in a high-pitched inaudible voice, this time round, in between the horns, small wings appeared, a butterfly like thing appeared. With its appearance resembling that of a fairy, the thing raised both its hands, following that, its surrounding wind started howling, and as Taito stared at that,

"Uwah, it was fire just now, and now it's wind, ah, I know about this! It's conjuration magic, that's it right!?"

Even though he said that, there was no way he could know what exactly it was.

Once again, the wind created by the fairy was transferred into the tip of the arrow. The young woman drew the bowstring. But this time round, the arrow didn't fly. However, the sound came. *Gorrh*, an invisible sound came.

Zuban, a strange sound rang out from several places of his body.

On hearing that,

"..... ah ~."

Uttered Taito.

And he looked down at his own body. His chest, his right leg, and his left foot were sliced by something sharp, and seemed about to slip apart. Of course, since his regeneration took place immediately, it didn't happen.

"Is that a whirlwind?"

On hearing those words, the girl's face was clouded with surprise. Well, that's for sure. The sound, *Zuban*, had indicated that the attack was successful and she had witnessed the instant when his body parts were about to slip off. It was for certain to her that the battle had ended.

However, a smile surfaced on Taito's lips,

"In a death game, I can start again after dying once right?"

He said.

With that, he lowered his body. Taking a stance to prepare himself for battle. He clenched his right fist, ignited the flames of the Martes Devil to verify whether he could invoke the powers that Himea had conferred to him.

Tenma

This was a magic that gives birth to an incredible amount of destructive power in exchange for blasting off the upper body of the user.

If he uses this, the girl before him will definitely die. That's why he didn't really want to use it if possible but,

"....."

At that moment, horns started appearing on the girl's head again. She seemed about to use some kind of magic.

Taito looked intently at her,

"Well, I can't be that easygoing I guess."

He muttered.

After all, he was no longer living a peaceful student life like before.

Moreover, the opponent was clearly hostile and intended to kill him.

On top of that, right now, Haruka had been abducted.

And it was the fellas who lived in this world who had abducted her.

In other words,

"..... it's you guys who took Haruka away huh?"

He tried saying, but of course, he couldn't get through to her. The horns protruding from the girl's forehead started flickering intensely.

Taito looked intently at that and thought.

During these two weeks, what on earth did they do to Haruka, what kind of thoughts did Haruka have, Taito had no clue and was afraid to imagine what that might be.

However, upon thinking about that.

"..... I might just get serious you know?"

He said.

"On top of that, I'm not too strong, so I can't go easy on her. But still, if I have to do it....."

With that, he clenched his fist tightly. Upon doing that, that light of the Tenma Martes Devil residing in his hand shone brighter.

This was the first time he had to fight a monster that looked like a human since his battle with Hinata, Gekkou's twin brother.

There might be a possibility of him getting killed.

There might also be a possibility of him killing that living thing which looked like a human.

Thinking about that, as expected, his heart tugged at him. The truth is, only until recently, he was but an innocent, naive, ordinary high school student born in a peaceful country.

But still, even so.

Even so, it's a different story if comrades or family were abducted.

But, however naive, innocent, a person is, however weak a person is, he will fight back.

So.

"....."

In between the horns of the girl, a strange looking fish-like, dragon-like, snake-like being with fins and tails attached appeared. That dragon rotated, and started scattering water around it.

The water gathered at the tip of the arrow that had been notched by the girl, and she was about to fire it towards him.

And at the same time.

"Alright, here goes!"

Taito yelled as well, and punched his right fist forward.

♦

Some time ago before that.

In the forest north of the rift which leads into this world from the student council room,

"....."

Was Gekkou.

With jet black hair and cold eyes. His slender body clad in Miyasaka High school uniform with a stand-up collar. On his arm was a band that indicated that he was a student council executive member, and from his belt, hung something that looked like a fencing sword.

While the figure of him in a student uniform felt out of place in the dense, luxuriant forest, he was already used to infiltrating into other worlds in his Miyasaka uniform.

His piercing eyes squinted as he stared into the forest.

In the forest where giant trees which he has never seen before thrived, inhabited animals which clearly do not exist in the human world.

As to what kind of animals they were, their looks were so strange that he couldn't quite compare them to those which inhabit the human world, and as such, for now, it was not quite possible to elaborate further, but in any case, they appeared to be carnivorous and had come to attack the Gekkou who had entered the forest.

And of course, those lowly creatures which did not know their place and had come to sink their teeth into the genius were cut down by his sword.

In other words, the names of those strange creatures whose names were unknown to him were,

"..... small fries."

He thought, and turned around. He looked down at a defeated, unknown monster's dead body, and sighed out.

Following that, he started walking again. The ones he wanted to meet are not these lowly creatures. More importantly, he needed to meet the one that governs this world, the one that stands at the top of this world.

"..... well, whatever's left in this forest probably isn't anything of high intellect."

He muttered.

By the way, the anchor which marks Shigure Haruka's location, which was found by Saitohimea, should be around this region.

In other words, Shigure Haruka should have been kidnapped to somewhere here in this world.

If she was indeed abducted to this location, this primitive forest, then,

"..... it might be a little terrible."

Said Gekkou in a groaning tone.

If so, then Shigure Haruka would have really been abducted by these unintelligent, carnivorous monsters. Monsters from another dimension, which have low intellect and love human meat.

If she were really taken away by such monsters, then, it was unlikely that she is still alive. At any rate, it has been two weeks since she was abducted. Then, what's left are probably just bones.

Instead, under such circumstances, it would be better for them if the development turns out to be one where some highly intelligent race from some world had laid a trap for them in this forest for the purpose of stealing something such as power from the student council.

Then, at that moment.

"....."

Gekkou felt a presence behind him and a smile surfaced. From behind him, little by little, something was approaching him in a manner as if to conceal its presence from Gekkou.

However, those movements were not perfect like those of wild animals. Neither was it a four-legged carnivorous animal approaching him in a stealthy manner.

They were the sounds of a humanoid closing in. On top of that, the opponent was acting in such a blockhead manner that even the sounds of the leaves it stepped on in a clumsy manner could be heard, to which a smile floated on Gekkou's face,

"..... a trap huh. Then, in that case, things just became more straightforward."

Upon saying that, he drew his sword. And turned around. In order to capture the opponent who seemed to be searching for something, he started running.

"....."

Upon turning around, he saw a single girl.

A girl with a strange appearance.

A girl wearing a strange outfit that seemed to be totally out of place in this fantastic forest.

She has golden hair. As if there was actually some meaning to it, her golden hair danced in a zigzag fashion in the air.

And that short body that couldn't have been older than thirteen, fourteen years old, was clad in a Miyasaka High sailor uniform and red pleated skirt.

To that girl who was wearing an outfit that totally didn't suit her surrounding forest,

"Why the hell are you here!"

Gekkou hollered.

She is Andou Mirai --- no, Mirai of Andu, a lightning demon who has made a contract with Gekkou, and she was supposed to be exploring the east side of the << **Way** >>.

But yet, right now, for some reason, she was tailing him. On top of that, her tailing was so unskilled as if to tell, *come find me*, and despite that, she had a surprised look that said, *I got found!?*.

Gekkou glowered at Mirai, who had a stupid look on her face, and said.

"..... what did I say at the start?"

Nervously, Mirai answered.

"Since there's no time, we should split up in four directions and explore them."

"And which direction are you in charge of?"

"E-East."

"That's right. It's east. The direction which you should be exploring is east. But yet, right now, you are on the north side. Explain."

Mirai then made a troubled face, and following that, with a somewhat embarrassed, *eh-hehe* laugh,

"I was heading straight and for some reason, I was behind Gekkou....."

"I see."

"No, no, it's true, you know? I was really giving my all to head straight, you know? But, along the way, there was this extremely beautiful butterfly, and I said to it, *come here*, and after that....."

"So, the blockhead tottered along after it?"

But, for some reason, in response to that, Mirai held out the palm of her hand proudly,

"No! An awesome person like me has a mission! And I flat out rejected that thought."

"I see. Then why the hell are you here?"

On hearing Gekkou's questions, once again, she made a timid face,

"Eh? As I said, I was heading straight and for some reason, I was behind Gekkou....."

"Liar. You followed it right?"

"Erm....."

"You followed the butterfly right?"

"Erm, even when there were two of them, I wasn't tempted you know? But, even for Buddha, three times is a litte....."

On hearing those words,

"Those are my lines, stupid demon."

Upon saying that, Gekkou kicked a stone off the ground.

And that stone flew towards Mirai's face, however, it was flicked off by her hair, which was floating in the air due to her lightning state. Following that, she made a V sign with the tip of her hair,

"Yay!"

And took a pose.

Looking at that pose, Gekkou sighed out from deep exasperation.

Then, at the same time as that.

Suddenly, from around him,

""+x/...*+=~~▼♦◿""

Strange, hard-to-hear voices rang out.

And it was not just one. But several of them.

Gekkou turned around. Before he knew it, he was surrounded.

Humanoid men with a beautiful appearance. However, with just one look, he knew that they weren't humans. For some reason, as they were chanting in high-pitched voices, horns protruded out from their heads.

Gekkou frowned upon seeing that.

"Aah, crap. After all the trouble I took to proceed cautiously, thanks to the idiot, we got surrounded."

"Eh ~, it's not my fault ok ~"

"Then, whose fault was it?"

On hearing Gekkou's words, Mirai turned to her back with an angry face,

"That's right! Whose fault was it! Reflect on it, reflect on it!"

She said. For some reason, she had said it happily, even while under such a pressuring situation.

Gekkou then felt like clutching his head, well, it's not the first time that this fella had proved to be useless, and he decided to let things be.

More importantly.

"....."

Once again, he turned his attention to the current situation. To put it clearly, right now, they were in the worst possible situation. Rather, it was so bad that there was no point in making a fuss about it.

He knew the names and the race of these humanoid men who had horns protruding from their heads. He also roughly knew what kind of powers they wielded and how powerful they were.

Rather, when he took the required examination on foreign worlds and races set by the << **Military** >> in order to get appointed as the student council president of Miyasaka High, it was among the very first few questions in the paper.

These fellas were 'elves'.

They have always been the enemies of humans, and even though right now, they were restricted by a truce, if something were to happen, a war could spark with this battle loving monsters. Gekkou didn't want to get involved with these unpleasant creatures, who can launch their nuclear-like weapons, in human terms, into his world without batting an eyelid.

In other words,

"..... hey Mirai."

Gekkou said in a nervous voice.

On hearing that, with her usual cheerful voice,

"You want to say that right ~? You want to tell me to kick their asses right? Alright!! Since today, right from the start, Gekkou has released me from my seal, I have become a great demon ~, and I shall show you my power! Now now what should I do? Shall I call a rain of lightning?"

Upon saying that, she raised both her hands.

In both her hands, were bouts of intense, crackling lightning.

But,

"No, the opposite. Don't do anything. And, we're going to get out of here."

Gekkou said instead.

Mirai then replied with a face full of surprise,

"Eh?"

However, he already had no time to explain everything to this idiot. That's why, he grabbed hold of her lightning charged hair, and with that, he rode her small body like a horse.

In response to that,

"Eh? Eh? What's this, what's....."

Mirai said, but her head was struck,

"Enough, just keep quiet and listen to me, we're going to get out of here right now with everything we got. But your legs are faster than mine. With the speed of lightning, head back to where we've come from."

He yelled.

At that moment, the elves had completed their magic. It was a summoning magic used for summoning undead beasts from the spirit world. Mirai then started frantically,

"Wah wah wah wah, they're going to attack! Let's retaliate....."

However, as Mirai was about to attack, her head was struck.

"Gya."

She cried out and with a tearful face, and glared at him, to which he said.

"Retaliations are forbidden as well. It will turn into a war. You are only allowed to dodge their attacks. And also, enough of this and just listen to me!"

And at last, while she affirmed with a *Uhn* in an unsatisfied voice, she started running.

Having her demon powers unsealed, she ran at an incredibly fast speed.

Gekkou then praised her honestly,

"Orh, good work. With this kind of speed, they probably won't be able to catch up to us."

"Eh-hehe, is Mirai awesome? Awesome right?"

"Yeah. Awesome. But you're running in the wrong direction."

"Eh? But I came from that direction you know?"

"But you came from the east."

"Eh? Then where am I heading now?"

"North."

"Eeeeeeehhhh, isn't this the direction that Gekkou is heading?"

"That's right."

"Then, it's totally opposite right?"

"That's what I've been trying to tell you, well, forget it. Let's just take a big detour and circumvent the enemy, then get back to the place where we came from."

"Circumvent circumvent circumvent, what's that ~?"

"A word that can't be understood by an idiot. Stop thinking about complicated stuff and just keep on running. Just follow my instructions. Now, go, horsey."

Mirai frowned upon hearing those words,

"Ah, ah, somehow, I didn't like that."

"You don't like 'horsey'?"

"Yeah."

"Then, go, mule."

"What's a mule?"

"Something like a pegasus."

"Ooooohhh ~, pegasus! That, that sounds real good!"

"Right? Then, hurry and get going, mule."

"Orh ~!"

Upon saying that, Mirai ran at full speed.

The place they would be heading to was where Taito would be.

Since Saitohimea isn't a human, even if she attacks an elf, it will barely be a problem, but that idiot Kurogane is a human.

If humans were to attack the elves right here in this world,

"..... then there won't be any human world left to return to."

He groaned with an exasperated face.

♦

And once again, the place shifted.

To the west of the rift from the student council room, by the side of a lake.

Saitohimea was there.

Her long lavender hair shone with a spectrum of seven colors from the light of the sun. With white porcelain skin, and a pair mischievous deep crimson eyes.

A beautiful girl who seemed to be a goddess who had come out of a fairy tale, and, for some reason, wearing a Miyasaka High sailor uniform which somehow didn't suit her.

She was a mismatch with the beautiful lake that was so clear that the bottom could be seen.

No, in the first place, there should not exist anything in this world that should be a mismatch to her presence.

This world became a contrasting existence to her because she was born.

Because she was born as a solitary monster that was called the

"....."

She squinted her eyes and peered into the bottom of the lake.

Something was coming up from the bottom of the lake. Something was parting the water, and spiraling straight towards here. Something flew out. The water splashed forth and the droplets fell onto Himea.

She then made a brushing motion with her hand. With just that brushing motion alone, all the water that had fallen onto her disappeared.

And she turned her gaze to the thing that had burst out of the water.

The creature that had appeared was something resembling that of a human. Its gender was male.

That man stood on the surface of the lake.

With half-closed eyes and long golden hair. There were a number of red lines on his face and she knew that magic flowed in them.

The man, with his arms folded, glowered at her,

"....."

And said something which Himea could not understand.

She then held out her hand to signaled to him to wait, and following that, she gave a tap to her head with her finger. And activated the magic used to translate the intentions of the other party in her mind. Upon doing that, the spell started working.

"Alright, speak."

The man's eyes widened in slight surprise.

"..... a magic to understand the consciousness of others huh. A pretty high level magic."

He said.

But Himea shrugged her shoulders,

"It's not something that difficult though?"

"Really?"

"Yeah."

"Then..... you must be a terribly great threat to us. To be able to use a power far greater than ours..... are you a << Most Ancient Sorcerer >> Vampire?"

Himea nodded at that query.

"Yeah."

On hearing that, the man's face clouded,

"What kind of business does a monster from the legends have with our world? We don't welcome you."

On hearing those words, Himea laughed.

"Ah-haha. Wherever I go, I'm not welcome."

"I guess. Who in the world will welcome the crazy demon god who wields the most terrible magic?"

"Are you speaking bad of me?"

"It's fear."

"Are you afraid of me?"

"I'm afraid that you will bring harm to this world."

Himea laughed again. With that, she squatted down, and submerged her fine, slender finger into the lake,

"..... such as turning all the water in this world into poison?"

The man became nervous on hearing those words. In truth, Himea did not possess such a power, but clearly, the man had reacted to her words.

And the man said. Glaring at her,

"..... what do you plan to extort from us? What in the world have you come here for?"

But, Himea looked up at the man and said,

"Before that, first tell me your origins. If you don't introduce yourself, we can't carry on."

"Uhn? You came here without knowing who we are?"

"Yeah."

"Then, could it be you've come upon here by chance?"

But, she shook her head,

"I didn't come here by chance. But, for you to have such a reaction....."

Perhaps, the anchor marking the location of Haruka, whom Taito was deeply worried about, was not placed by them, Himea thought.

Following that, for an instant,

"....."

She thought of something unpleasant. She thought of something very unpleasant. The face of Taito when he knew about the disappearance of Haruka-chan. His flustered face that was on the verge of crying.

Isn't it strange for him to be worried about another girl other than me, she thought as she recalled the flustered face of Taito.

"....."

However, there's nothing she could do even if she thought about it now, so she forced a smile on her face, and brushed off her unpleasant thoughts.

She should already be used to this. In the end, she can't be loved by anyone, this kind of realization, she should already be used to it.

Besides, her feelings towards the Taito who had said he loved her won't change.

That's why.

"You guys kidnapped a human right?"

She asked.

On hearing those words, the man's face became much more threatening than before.

"I see. So now the << Most Ancient Sorcerer >> Vampire are siding with humans?"

"I don't side with anyone."

"Then why did you ask....."

But, she started moving her finger that was submerged in the lake. Upon doing that, a green light appeared at the tip of her finger, which acted as the origin from which the poison spread.

Of course, while she couldn't turn all the water in this world into poison by doing that, but poisoning this entire lake was a simple affair.

Seeing that, the man frantically started,

"W-What are you....."

But, cutting him off, Himea continued.

"Since you kept on talking just now without answering my questions, I thought I should first show you who actually has the advantage here."

"W-Wait. I get it. I'll answer your questions."

"Really?"

"Yeah. So please stop."

Himea nodded. She drew her finger out of the water, and stood up. Then,

"Your name."

She asked.

The man then answered.

"..... Bestlo."

"What are you?"

"I'm the one who controls the spirit of this lake."

"Control the spirit.....? I see, you are a E l f Spirit User?"

"That's right"

The man nodded.

She then understood why earlier, the man had a distasteful look when the topic on humans cropped up.

The elves have hated the humans since a long time ago. Just recently, well, really it was a few thousand years ago, humans had come invading into the elves' world via a << **Holy Ground** >>, and had taken away a large number of their children, and since then, their antagonism has persisted till now.

The humans had done terrible things such as using the children as sacrifices and dissecting them, trying to create a new breed by pairing humans with

the elves who possess who large amount of magic, and carrying out other such foolish experiments over and over again.

On top of that, because of their beautiful appearance to the human eye, they have been treated as expensive pets for the rich, or as partners for sexual gratification.

Of course, they didn't think that these wouldn't infuriate the elves, but as the humans at that time were still unable to comprehend the proper use of << **Holy Grounds** >>, they thought that they were the only ones who could go over to the other side, and had never considered the possibility of the elves would come waging war on this side.

And it became killings.

Terrible killings with the desire of exterminating each other.

Well, the << Most Ancient Sorcerer >> like her, she didn't really care whether the humans got exterminated, or whether the elves got exterminated, but right now, thinking about it, she was glad that a truce was established between the two, she thought from the bottom of her heart.

Since if all the humans were exterminated then, Taito would not have been born.

Taito.

Taito.

"....."

Just by murmuring that softly, a warm smile floated on her face. *Uwufufu*, she wanted to laugh out like an idiot. Just by thinking about the face of fickle idiot who has come into Haruka-chan and her lives, made her want to grin.

Then, she sighed at that weakness of her.

"Isn't it really bad for the elves to kidnap a human?"

On hearing that, that elf called Bestlo, with a difficult expression, said,

"I do not have the authority to answer that question."

"Hm. And if I intend to force you to answer me?"

"Kill me."

"Ah, I see."

"Yeah."

"Then, tell me the place where I can find the person who can answer that question."

On hearing that, Bestlo turned his gaze to the south. To the southern side where a grassland extended, where Taito was supposed to be.

Then,

"..... head towards the principality. There's an elf who's of a higher status than me there."

"And that fella would have a grasp of the situation?"

"Even with regards to that....."

"Aah, alright alright. You can't answer me right? I get it. Then, I shall head towards there."

Upon saying that, Himea turned on her heel. Her skirt twirled with her. As she was about to start off, Bestlo called out from behind her,

"..... it seems like you are not the V a m p i r e
<< Most Ancient Sorcerer >>, not the crazy monster that I've heard of. I thought I was going to get tortured and killed if I can't give an answer to your question....."

On hearing that, Himea turned around, and smiled mischievously.

"Don't let your guard down. I might just go *Roar* and attack you now, you know?"

Bestlo smiled at that.

"I don't see that happening."

"Ah-haha. See you then. Thanks for the info."

"Aah. I'm grateful for your mercy."

On saying that, Bestlo returned to the depths of the water. After ascertaining that,

"..... alright. For now, I shall get back to where Taito is."

Upon saying that, Himea started walking.

♦

The place shifted back to the south.

Before him, was a bow wielding girl, who had summoned a small dragon between the horns protruding from her head, and water was gathering at the tip of her arrow.

And she was about to release that arrow.

At the same time,

"Well, here I go, hiya!"

Upon yelling that, Taito was about to release the power of the Tenma Martes Devil that was residing in his right hand.

"Idiot! It's not the time to go *here I go, hiya*!"

From behind him, all of a sudden, the voice of a detestable guy called out.

On hearing that,

"Eh?"

Taito uttered and he turned around.

Indeed, the detestable fella was behind him. The stuck-up student council president who has no regard for others and who doesn't think of people as people, Kurenai Gekkou, and for some reason, he was riding on the back of Mirai and closing in towards here.

Gekkou then went on to say.

"Mirai, throw me towards that idiot."

"Alroight ~."

With that, Mirai lifted Gekkou with both her hands. And threw with all her might. And Gekkou flew towards Taito with an incredible momentum. On top of that, Gekkou drew the sword at his waist in midair, and adopted a stance.

Instantly upon seeing that,

"Orh ~ Gekkou, did you come to help me?"

He said but, somehow, it didn't seem to be that. Gekkou thrust out his sword, he thrust out with all his might.

He thrust out towards Taito's chest.

"Hey, why?"

"Shut up and just die."

"Eh, eh, w-wait a minute. I don't understand the situation at all....."

"A small fry need not understand anything."

Upon saying that, Gekkou's sword pierced through Taito's chest. At his heart. But Gekkou did not stop. With that, he swept at Taito's legs, and with that, he pinned Taito to the ground.

Of course, he died once. After his heart was pierced by the sword, the beating stopped once. Following that, his heart started repairing itself, but with the sword in his chest, he could feel an excruciating amount of pain.

"Hey, it hurtsssssssssssssssssss, don't shit with me! Pull out your sword quickly....."

However, disregarding those words,

"Mirai. Cover this idiot's mouth to keep him quiet."

"Alroight ~."

"Don't just go *alroight*..... fugafugogo."

Mirai covered his mouth and his words were lost.

He could no longer tell what the situation was and what was happening.

However, the girl's magic did not stop. Facing them, she was about to release the arrow which was coated with a ~~Rasengan~~ spiraling mass of water.

If he were to receive that head on, it would be bad, but, with his chest pierced by Gekkou's sword, and his mouth covered by the demon with her moronic strength, he couldn't do anything under such circumstances.

That's why, he wanted to say, *aaaahhh, this is terrible you know, hey*, but from his mouth came,

"Fugugugu, fuguigugugo"

A muffled voice sounded.

Meanwhile, the girl's magic was completed. And was about to release the arrow.

However, in response to that, Gekkou raised up both his hands as if to surrender.

"Wait. We did not come here to do harm on you. So sheath your weapons. According to the treaty, we are forbidden to attack you, but, it'll also be bad for you guys if you attack us right?"

He said.

On hearing that, the girl's face seemed to turn to one of hesitation,

"....."

But, as expected, they could not understand what she was saying. And there was no sign of her undoing her magic.

Gekkou scowled at that,

"Damn. They can't understand the human tongue huh..... then."

After saying that, he looked around him once,

"Shall we just capture this one and kill her? Then, there will be no witness to the battle between idiot Kurogane and the elf."

He said something dangerous.

With that, Gekkou then appeared as if he was about to pull out the sword that was impaled into Taito's chest.

Even though just now, Taito was also about to battle out with the girl, but, if it is three versus one, the story will be different.

Clearly, the horned girl appeared frightened. On top of that, Gekkou was talking about capturing and killing her.

Well, that sounds bad right, he thought. In such an event, won't they become the same as those who have taken Haruka away, he thought.

However, on top of that,

"Oh, seems like things are getting heated up here ~"

A voice rang out.

Himea's voice.

Taito then turned his gaze towards her. A girl wearing a pretty sailor uniform who was more beautiful than the girl wielding the bow, so beautiful that she couldn't have been from this world, was standing there.

Himea looked at Taito, who was held down by Gekkou,

"I've said this before though, do you think I'll forgive you for using violence against Taito?"

She said.

Gekkou then said,

"Saitohimea huh? You came at the right time. You are able to use magic to translate the language of other races and communicate with them right? Translate that elf's words for us."

He said.

But Himea smiled,

"Already done. Rather, I've already invoked the translation spell inside your heads, so you should already be able to talk to them, I think....."

She said.

At that moment,

"..... I request backup! I'm battling with **Humans** right now! The place is southwest of the Fireus plains. The **Humans**, the **Humans** have broken the agreement, and have come invading us!?"

She seemed to be saying to someone. Her voice was shaking terribly. She appeared to be on the verge tears. She looked at them as if she was looking at some incredible monsters.

"..... eh ~"

He thought.

Somehow, the situation seemed to be different from what Taito had thought.

Taito raised his hands, dislodged Mirai's hand from his mouth, and asked Himea.

"What's this?"

Himea then smiled gently at him,

"I'll explain it later."

In the meantime, things continue to unfold.

From the northern side where Gekkou came from, a number of men who looked like Northern Europeans, just like the girl, came.

On top of that, a large number of their comrades seemed to be gathering behind the girl.

To put things bluntly, it seemed like a sure-death situation. Getting surrounded in all directions, a situation which seemed to precede total annihilation.

However, Gekkou said.

"Don't be rash! Aren't you the ones who are attacking? Our side has yet to touch anyone on your side. We've just come here to talk!"

He said.

Just tens of seconds ago, this fella had said something dangerous about capturing and killing one of them, but now, he made a hundred and eighty degree turn.

And, having regained her courage as a result of her gathering comrades perhaps, the girl who had been about to use her magic glared at them,

"But that guy wanted to hit me!"

"So, in reality, did he hit you?"

"No, he didn't though....."

"Then, we have not broken the agreement on our side. The ones who are breaking it are you. This will become a problem you know."

"No way....."

But, from beside her, a man backed her up,

"Shut up **Human**. I won't allow you to say that you've forgotten what you've done to us. Just by being here, you are clearly staging an attack on us."

On hearing those words, Gekkou laughed through his nose.

"I don't feel like talking to someone who can't see the situation rationally."

"What!?"

"Just shut up. And isn't there someone who's more cool-headed?"

Upon saying that, from behind the group, a tall beautiful woman, who probably stands at the height of 190cm, stood out. The woman looked intently at them,

"Who would be the ones who can't analyze this calmly, I wonder? If we dispose of you here, there will be no one to witness it. Whatever happens between us here shouldn't become a problem right?"

On hearing those words, Gekkou continued to smile.

"We have come here as ambassadors for the << **Military** >>. You know of the << **Military** >> right? It was the organization, together with the likes of the << **Church** >> and **Temperon Crowley** who have stamped the seal on the truce agreement with the elves. It was that << **Military** >> who has sent us here, and they are waiting for our return. But, if we don't return, what do you think will happen? Don't you think that the << **Military** >> will think that you are the ones who have killed us?"

But, the tall woman smiled.

"But there's no evidence right? Without evidence, it's the same as saying you humans still want to abduct, violate, destroy, and devour us, you know."

"I don't really see it that way."

"I see. Then it's a matter of difference in perspective."

"Yeah. I already know that you guys are bloodthirsty idiots crazed for battles. Then....."

He said. And then in a soft voice,

"Kurogane. Let them kill you again. And we'll take a picture of it. If we act in self-defense, it should be fine I guess."

He said to Taito.

However, before Taito could answer that,

"Hey, wait a minute, before that, I have something to say though."

Said Himea.

Gekkou then glanced at Himea,

"To butt in like that, what good idea do you have?"

He asked.

On hearing that, she smiled.

"Since the useless student council president is in trouble, I thought I should give him a hand."

"I'll kill you."

"Ah-haha. Only if you are capable of that."

While saying that, she took a step forward.

She then looked at the group of men and women known as elves.

On seeing that, Taito thought. Elves, they say, isn't it that? Don't they have pointed ears? These fellas have horns coming out of them when they use magic though? He wanted to ask such a foolish question, but somehow right now, since it did not seem like it wasn't the right time to ask that, he kept quiet.

Himea said to the group of elves.

"Please look at me."

On hearing that, the tall elf woman said,

"What is it this time, human."

She said.

Himea then smiled.

"The elf I met earlier saw through my nature right away though, you guys aren't capable of that, it seems."

"What in the world are you talking about?"

"I'm not a human. And since right now, your heads are too heated up, let me, one who isn't a human, mediate for you, that's what I'm saying."

"We can do without your kindness....."

Cutting her off, Himea said.

"The one who ruled the lake in the west, the elf called Bestlo, has never adopted such an attitude towards me though....."

On hearing those words, all the elves became silent. And with a slightly surprised look on her face, the elf woman said,

"..... are you an acquaintance of Marquis Bestlo?"

"Marquis? He's a pretty important person huh? But, the Marquis actually showed me respect, you know. But yet, why have you guys yet to kneel before me?"

At her words, the elves were getting increasingly flustered. Who on earth is the person before them, they appeared to be measuring her.

An elf in the crowd said.

"Don't be tricked by a human."

Another said.

"She's just juggling with the right words to deceive us....."

However, before he could finish,

"You guys shut up."

Himea said. And she put her hand forward. From that hand, a light appeared, and flew from her hand. It then crashed into the face of that complaining elf man and that man screamed out in agony as he got blasted away.

Instantly,

"She attacked!?"

"You've broken the agreement!"

"It's war! It has become war!"

Even among the commotion, Himea said calmly,

"Didn't I tell you earlier that I'm not human? I don't really care about the conflicts between the humans and elves and how you guys kill each other though..... if you want to go to war, please help yourself. But, right now, you should listen to me."

In response to that, the elf woman said.

"Who, or what, on earth are you?"

Himea replied.

"A Vampire << Most Ancient Sorcerer >>."

Once again, the male elves behind laughed,

"See, she's lying. There's no way such a legendary monster will come to this place....."

But, in order to suppress the commotion, the tall woman said. With a slightly nervous expression,

"..... keep quiet, Renk. There's no way His Highness, Marquis Bestlo, will appear before a fake demon god. His Highness is supposed to be sleeping at the bottom of the lake for a hundred years, you know?"

On hearing her words, this time round, at last the elves went back to silence.

Himea then nodded,

"Finally, we can talk?"

The woman nodded,

"I apologize. We have acted impudently in front of the guest of Marquis Bestlo-sama....."

However, Himea said,

"However impudent the lowly humans and elves may act towards me, it doesn't bother me the slightest."

"Then, we....."

"Just disappear. I don't have any business with you. Aah, but send a messenger to the kingdom. By Bestlo's referral, I'm supposed to go meet with the royalty."

On hearing those words, the tall woman became a little troubled,

"Even if you said 'kingdom' to me, in this world, there are four kingdoms and nine spirit kings however....."

But, Himea pointed straight ahead.

"The country in this direction. Bestlo told me to go to the kingdom to the south. That's the kingdom Bestlo belongs to right?"

The elf woman then turned towards where Himea had pointed. And then.

"..... I understand. I'll send a messenger to the Kingdom of Folheim."

"Really?"

"Yes."

"That's great. Then, disappear."

At those words, the elves dispersed. Even though there were still someone who seemed unsatisfied, but somehow, the commotion here had seemed to come to an end.

After watching the elves disperse completely, Taito got up and said,

"Wow, Himea is really awesome."

Himea smiled happily.

"Taito is also awesome ~"

After saying something incomprehensible, she snuggled up to him.

Gekkou then said from beside,

"Those cowards just wimped out on seeing the troublesome criminal who had brought calamity to the world."

While leaning her head against Taito's chest, Himea then said to Gekkou,

"Are you jealous that you can't make them afraid of you?"

"Hah."

"Ah-haha."

At that moment, for some reason, Mirai pouted,

"Jeez ~, I'm also a super demon, but why didn't anyone realize it?"

She said.

"Because you're a pipsqueak."

What ~!, Mirai raised both her hands angrily in reaction to that.

But well, who cares about that.

Taito looked at Gekkou,

"So, what should we do now? Since they are elves, and the elves and humans are bounded by a truce, it will be bad to fight them..... and also, even though I understood what was being said, but can we conclude that Haruka was kidnapped by them?"

He asked.

On hearing that, for some reason, Himea pulled herself away from Taito's chest. With a somewhat gloomy face, she looked away.

"Hn?"

Taito uttered, and Himea started,

"..... Bestlo had said that he was not conferred the authority to speak of that matter. And the one who could answer that would be an elf of a higher status."

She said in a somewhat emotionless tone.

Seeing that, Taito wanted to say something to Himea, but was intercepted by Gekkou.

"While I don't know how the hierarchy of the elves works out, if a Marquis can't answer that, it's probably something really big. In other words, this matter on the abduction of Shigure Haruka has involved the royalty themselves, and has become a huge affair, isn't it?"

Himea shrugged her shoulders and said.

"I don't know. I can't get anything more than that out of Bestlo."

"Hey wait a minute. What's this? In other words, Haruka has been captured by the kingdom of the elves?"

Gekkou nodded.

"Seems so."

"Why?"

"How would I know?"

"No, even if you said that, Haruka is a normal human being right? It's not like she has some strange power, or is a monster, she's just a normal high school girl right? Why would the elves, the royal family abduct her....."

Gekkou suddenly punched the face of Taito.

"Gya."

As he groaned, Taito's body was pushed backward. Blood came out from the side of his mouth, but the wound healed immediately. He then glared at Gekkou,

"I'm going to kill you, you piece of shit."

"Fool, you are the one who should be killed. Calm down a little. None of us here has yet to have a proper grasp on the situation. That's why we should gather as much information as we can. Or you prefer something else? Do you have a magic that allows you to find out the answer by kicking up a fuss? If you have it, then use it. Use it now. If you can't, just keep quiet, small fry."

He told him in a breath.

Getting beaten up blue black, Taito said.

"Uwu ~, I really want to beat this guy....."

He muttered, but for now, since what this fella said was right, he kept silent.

Then, he turned his sight. He turned his sight to the direction of where Himea was pointing, to the place called Kingdom of Folheim.

If we're talking about a kingdom, there should be some kind of castle, but, it was not visible from here.

Here, what was only visible was a large expanse of beautiful grassland, and there was no sign of any castle nor towns.

In other words, it was perhaps a place that was very far away from here, or perhaps it was hidden from view by some kind of magic or sorcery, a power that wouldn't normally appear in the life a normal high school student life.

Whichever the case, it seems like Haruka was being held there.

"....."

Just by knowing that, his mood had changed to something that was quite different from some time ago.

Since Haruka disappeared, those two weeks when he didn't know whether she was safe or not were dark and painful, and ever since Himea had found where she had disappeared to, and up till now for the past few hours, everything has changed.

At that moment, Gekkou said.

"Right now, we need to get back to the school. If we were to negotiate with the royalty, we need to report this to the << **Military** >>."

With that, he started walking in the direction to where the rift was. Mirai then followed along and began,

"I'm hungry!"

"Didn't you just have your breakfast?"

"Yeah but, yeah but, after all tha exertion, my stomach's already empty ~"

They said as they were leaving.

"No erm, is it ok to take it easy like that? If we don't quickly go save Haruka....."

As he said that, Gekkou promptly replied,

"After all that, it doesn't make a difference if we wait another day."

"Erm, even if you say that....."

"The elves can't touch the humans. In spite of that, they kidnapped Shigure Haruka. On top of that, the perpetrators are the royalty. In other words, there can only be two possibilities as to what has happened to Shigure Haruka now. In order not to let anyone know they have kidnapped her, they have already killed her off, or perhaps in order to use her as a leverage for negotiation with the humans, they are taking good care of her."

Taito trembled slightly at those words. Since something which Taito had never thought about came from Gekkou's words.

--- Haruka was already killed.

He had frantically tried not to think about there while coming here. If he thought about that, it will be so painful, so painful, that he wouldn't be able to move anymore.

However, Gekkou continued.

"It's probably the later. If she has already been killed, then that Marquis Bestlo would not have asked Saitohimea to seek an audience with the royalty."

On hearing those words, Taito said in a weak voice,

"You really think so?"

He asked.

Gekkou then nodded.

"But that will also depend on us. If we make a mistake, in order to dispose of the evidence, they will probably then kill off Shigure Haruka. That's why, for the sake of not making a mistake, we're returning to the school. Do you have any complaints?"

On hearing that, Taito shook his head.

"Nope."

"Then shut up and follow me, slave."

Upon saying that, Gekkou started walking again.

And then Taito, who had been on the verge of going berserk ever since Haruka had been abducted, looked intently at the back of the student council president who had explained all that kindly to him,

"..... you, are actually quite a nice guy....."

"If you say anything further, I'll kill you."

"Haha."

With that, Gekkou and Mirai left. Of course, Taito and Himea had to go back as well.

"Well Himea, let's go back as well, shall we?"

He turned around.

However, for some reason, Himea was not there.

"Hey, Himea?"

He looked around him, but Himea was nowhere to be seen.

"Eeehh ~, did she go back ahead of us?"

Said Taito.

He then remembered the gloomy face of Himea earlier. And as to why she had made that face, he was not totally clueless about it.

But yet, Himea had helped him search for Haruka. On top of that, most of the information available this time was gathered by Himea.

"..... will Himea get more angry if I thank her?"

He murmured.

He then started walking.

The destination was the school. He took out his cellphone from his pocket, the second period of lessons had already started.

"..... what's the second period of today's lessons again?"

While saying that, he headed back to the school.

Chapter 2: Consideration of Daily Routine Management

Periodically, it became dark, then bright.

Was that because of the place she was at, or was it because of her, she did not know.

She merely alternated between bright cheerfulness and dark loneliness.

Right now was a time of brightness.

Inside a small but completely white room.

From a square hole in the ceiling, light streamed in. However, since that hole was very small, the illumination that allowed her to see the entire room must indeed be caused by some other power.

Perhaps, it's due to her own mood, she thought. Everything becomes brightly visible when she feels cheerful and darkly invisible when she feels gloomy.

The room itself was always dark. What currently illuminated the room was probably light from the star. It was probably nighttime in the world outside. However, gazing at that dim starlight, they really seem to be bright and beautiful,

"....."

Thought Shigure Haruka.

With beautiful medium length black hair, and an always kind smiling face. Wearing the sailor uniform of Miyasaka High, both her hands were right now bounded by chains.

No, to say that she was bounded was probably inaccurate.

Since she was the one who had bounded them.

Unable to forgive herself for repeatedly betraying Taito, she had bounded herself.

And finally, she felt like forgiving herself. Bearing a guilty conscience for having betrayed the one she loves again and again, she had always been crying in anguish, but right now, she was calm.

"..... thanks to you guys."

She said.

Then, she turned her gaze to the other side of the dim light, where two men were.

Upon doing that, one of them smiled.

"That goes the same for us, for making use of you."

The other one said.

"But is it really ok? About your wish....."

But, Haruka shook her head. With a happy smile, she said.

"This is the happiest choice I'm taking..... but, I'm sorry to be a bother to you. The other me, who has forgotten everything, was a nuisance with her crying right?"

"That's no problem at all. Since we'd erase that crying voice."

"I see."

"Yeah."

"Then, that's great."

Upon saying that, Haruka smiled.

On seeing her smile, the man who had spoken gently said.

"You really have a beautiful smile. I'm really envious of the man you have fallen for."

"Ah-haha. Really?"

"Yeah."

"Then I have to do my best. Since I've always been betraying him."

But, that man shook his head,

"You are already doing your best."

He said.

Haruka smiled again to that,

"But I have to..... I have to work harder."

Upon saying that, Haruka looked up again at the ceiling. Then, her vision became blurred. Her memories were disappearing. Her important memories were disappearing. The memories of her being an observer, and of her as an existence made for betraying Taito, were disappearing.

She was always afraid of that. She was afraid of herself betraying Taito again and again while smiling, ignorant of everything.

But those worries were now undue. Since she was chained up right now.

Since she was chained up in a place far away from Taito.

That's why.

"....."

At that moment, Haruka's eyes opened.

She then looked around her.

She was in a small room that was dark, so dark that she could hardly see anything.

On top of that, she had no idea why she was in such a place.

"Wh-what....."

She murmured. She then attempted to stand up. But she couldn't even do that.

Both her hands and feet were bounded by some chain-like things.

"Wh..... is this....."

Following that, on the other side, in the room which she could hardly see anything, a man's voice spoke.

"There's no cause for worry. We have no intention of harming you."

He said in a kind voice.

But,

"Who is it?"

Haruka said.

"Wh-What in the world are you trying to do?"

She said.

She then pressed her chest. She recalled the fear in her trembling body at the realization that she was abducted by someone during the time she had lost consciousness.

Following that, different from the voice before, another slightly more manly voice spoke,

"Hey, don't look at me. I'm not good with this fella."

The man with the gentle voice then spoke,

"Hasga is a gentle person after all. Well then, leave the rest to me....."

"No, I'll do it. Aniki is weak against girls and might let her escape."

"Haha. Even if it's me, I won't do that. Since if I do that, it'll make her sad. So....."

On hearing that, someone seemed to be closing in. Haruka trembled once again.

In this darkness, gettin surrounded by two unknown men, Haruka trembled in fear.

Save me, she wanted to cry out.

Someone save me, she wanted to cry out.

".....Ta-Taito..... save me....."

But, just as she was about to utter that, the man said.

"Let me dispel that fear."

That was really a kind voice.

A gentle voice.

And then.

♦

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When Taito opened the door to the classroom, all the students, together with Kanemaru Hajime, the teacher who was writing a factorization problem on the blackboard in the middle of the class, turned to face him.

As the students looked silently at him with a look of surprise, Taito felt as if the time had stopped and became ill at ease.

Kanemaru then said,

"..... aren't you quite the busy executive, Kurogane."

Upon saying that, the students burst out laughing.

A wry smile then surfaced on Taito's flushing face,

"Well ~, I had a little meeting with the president."

On hearing that, Kanemaru smiled,

"Don't spout nonsense. Hurry up and sit down. You are already behind the lessons because of your student council work. If you don't study, you'll fail you know?"

Upon saying that, he turned back to the blackboard. And resumed writing the factorization problem.

Looking at that problem, *uwah ~ I totally don't get it*, Taito thought. Well, in the first place, he wasn't really that smart anyway.

He then proceeded to his own desk.

His seat was the second seat from behind in the midsection of the class, and the seat to his right would belong to Haruka. However, no one sat there now. There were no belongings as well. Of course. Her whereabouts were unknown since two weeks ago. After the police searched through the belongings in her desk and locker, they were sent back to her home.

That's why, up until yesterday, whenever he looked at that empty desk of Haruka's, his chest will hurt, feeling as if he couldn't grab hold of anything with his hands.

No, the truth was, he had not been to class for most of the past few days.

But for today, Gekkou had said,

*"I'll report to the << **Military** >> on our intention to go see the royalty of the elves. Until the preparations have been made, for the next few hours, no, maybe for the next few days even, all of you should return to your normal routine."*

If he had not said that, Taito might never have thought of attending classes.

That's why in the instant he returned to this classroom,

"....."

The atmosphere became weird for some reason.

It felt like he was returning to his ordinary daily routine. Perhaps, it was because he could now fathom the possibility of finding Haruka, the possibility of her being alive, perhaps due to that,

"....."

Even though he didn't really understand, his feelings became a little lighter. With that, he smiled faintly. And headed to his desk.

In the midst of doing that, someone gave a hard slap to his buttocks. Taito looked at the person who had hit his buttocks. It was none other than the game-loving bespectacled Tanaka.

For some reason, Tanaka was smiling cheerfully at him. On top of that, from the seat close by, the game-loving Saitou smiled.

Even though he didn't really know what was so funny, the two of them smiled at him,

"Why are you guys smiling like that? Did Kanemaru's boring executive joke hit you in the sides?"

Taito murmured. But, his voice was too soft and it didn't reach them. The two merely grinned for some reason.

Taito shrugged his shoulders and reached his seat. And sat down. He looked up at the board, and just as he was about to take out his Mathematics textbook and notebook from his bag, he remembered that he had left them at home when Gekkou came to pick him up at his home through a << **Way** >> connected to the school this morning.

Then, from beside him,

"Did you leave your bag in the student council room?"

Asked a girl in a soft voice. Taito turned towards her. With her hair worn in a pretty bob, Yamashita Kaoru peered at his face with a delighted face.

Taito then replied,

"Ah ~, yeah. I forgot."

She then laughed,

"I'll share my textbook with you."

Upon saying that, she shifted her desk towards him. She then placed her textbook on Taito's desk, as well as brought her notes closer. And said with a soft voice,

"L-Later, I'll pass you all the printouts which were handed out when you were not around; they're all with me."

"Eh? Really?"

"Yup. They are in my locker. There's quite a lot of them ~. They were almost overflowing, and I bought a file without thinking."

"Really?"

"Really."

"Sorry. I'll pay for the file."

Yamashita then smiled, and said,

"Don't worry about that. It's a cute file that I wanted. But....."

"But, I'm glad that you're smiling."

She continued.

On hearing that, mildly surprised, Taito looked at her. She had a worried look on her face for some reason.

"Jeez, everyone in the class is worried about you ~. Since that incident, you've never once smiled and just kept looking up at the sky....."

She said.

"On top of that, you weren't around in class much. Even Karino-sensei was talking about whether he should go to your house or not."

Suddenly at that moment, the chime rang. Even though he just came back, the lesson had ended.

The teacher, Kanemaru said.

"Alright, that's all for today. Thanks, class."

But no responded to that. The class was not looking at the teacher. The students stood up and turned to Taito instead.

Tanaka then said,

"You smiled!?"

Satou further added,

"Jeez, it's not just you alone who feels sad with one of our classmates gone, you know? But yet, you have been making a stupid, dark face."

On top of that, the other guys said,

"You should discuss things with us."

"Even though we can't really help much, but still, we are buddies right?"

All of them chided him. With delighted faces.

Then, one of them. One of his classmates who was known to associate with some delinquent-like upperclassmen, famous in the basketball club, Niwano, glared at him,

"..... you, went on to search for Shigure yourself right? Don't do such a thing all by yourself. We'll lend you a hand, so don't think about doing stupid things by yourself."

He said.

On hearing that.

"....."

Didn't we just spend a mere two months together as classmates, geez, aren't you guys idiots?, Taito wanted to say to this bunch of good peeps who were suddenly standing right there before him,

"..... erm, can you guys stop saying such things? I really feel like crying now."

He said.

The students in the classroom then broke into smiles. Cheerful smiles. Following that, everyone looked at Haruka's seat.

"The police seems to have given up right."

One of the girls said. It was the friend of Haruka, Sakai Satomi.

And another girl went,

"Haruka's mother was admitted to hospital, wasn't she?"

"It's only been two weeks, do they normally give up at this point?"

"I have friends in another school, maybe I'll try asking them?"

"Kurogane-kun has been searching all this while right? If you need anything, just give us a shout. Such as making a large number of photograph posters?"

Stuff like that came out one after another.

On hearing that.

"....."

On hearing that, Taito smiled. *It's fine, the student council already has a grasp on where Haruka is*, he wanted to reply to them.

So I'll definitely save Haruka and bring her back, he wanted to say.

But, he couldn't say all that right now. If he said all that, it would cause a huge uproar. Besides, if he were to give them strange expectations now, he couldn't disappoint them later. Especially towards Haruka's mother. He couldn't go about giving non-concrete information to her hospitalized mother.

So he merely said,

"Thanks."

"Thank you, everyone. Well then, can you help me make some posters? I'll do a more proper search as well. Let's all bring Haruka back together."

He said.

Following that, *leave it to us, shall we do it today after school?*, they started.

With a mood that made him feel like crying,

"..... I'll definitely have to bring Haruka back."

Taito thought.

Since everyone was so worried. Not smiling everyday and feeling negative to the point of causing a nuisance to them, but yet, they were worried about him.

Then, I have to answer to everyone's feelings, he thought.

He then stood up.

The class turned towards him again. Yamashita, who was beside him,

"Where are you going?"

She asked.

Taito then smiled,

"I'm going to get my bag from the student council room."

He replied.

The bespectacled Tanaka then said,

"Are you planning to disappear on us again? Bring us along. Where on earth are you searching for Shigure-san anyway?"

But Taito said,

"No no, I'll be back later. If I continue to skip classes, the school won't have me here anymore. The factorization problem earlier, what was that? I totally didn't get it though?"

To which Satou said,

"Aah, don't worry about that. I didn't get it either."

Following that, Niwano said,

"Math makes me sleep."

To which everyone laughed.

Taito laughed as well, and then said,

"I'm really just going to get my bag. Hey, don't worry that much about me. I'm really grateful and feeling bad about it."

"Don't be!"

"Just treat everyone to a drink!"

But Taito replied flatly,

"I don't have that much pocket money."

Upon saying that, Taito started leaving the classroom.

From behind him,

"If you don't come back, we'll kill you alright?"

To which he nodded.

"I said I already got it. I really feel bad, so I'll be coming back."

Upon saying that, he left the classroom.

And he swore to himself he's not going to come back till he brings back Haruka. In order to return the debt of having his classmates worry about him, he will definitely bring Haruka back, he swore to himself.

He then started walking along the corridor.

Then, from the other direction of the corridor, the delinquent girl whom he just met in the morning was heading towards him.

Wearing a skirt short that makes one think, *is that really the same uniform as other students?*, and having bleached hair dyed blond.

Aomi Izumi.

Even she would not smoke in the corridor during recess time, and as she saw him, she started waving her hand.

"Oh ~ Taito ~."

"Hey, did you just drop the honorifics?"

He said, to which she laughed and moved closer t him,

"What's that, we're pals from the student council right?"

As she said that, he immediately recalled her earlier words about introducing her to Gekkou and getting her into the student council. Well, after going through a life-and-death situation in the world of elves, Taito had already forgotten about it.

Seeing the face of Taito,

"Aah ~! You haven't told the president about me right?"

"Erm."

"Jeez, get a hold of yourself ~. If you don't do it, I'll tell everyone about the fire incident this morning....."

"Ah, ah, wait a minute. I'll do it, so don't go about spreading that."

"If you don't want me to do that, then quickly do it."

"Err."

"I see I see. Everyone! This Kurogane Taito-kun was in the female toilet this morn....."

"Heeeyyy!"

Taito covered her mouth frantically. Of course, he could no longer prevent the surrounding people from fixing their attention on him.

Taito then glared at her,

"I get it already! I'm going back to the student council room right now and will tell Gekkou about you so stop causing all that commotion."

He said.

A satisfied smile then surfaced on her and she nodded twice. After ascertaining that, Taito removed his hand from her mouth. A light shade of pink from her lipstick got onto his hand and he wiped it with his pants.

She grinned at Taito,

"Then, we're going to become pals in the student council right ~. You can call me Izumi-san."

"Hey, why did you call me by my name and I have to call you with a 'san' attached?"

"Hn? You want to call me by my name? Then why don't you become my boyfriend?"

"No way."

"Then, use 'san'. I don't like to be called by my name other than my boyfriend."

She said.

She then turned around,

"Then, I'll be seeing you in the student council room after school and we can continue from there."

She said.

Faced with her forcefulness, feeling dumbstruck,

"Alright alright."

Taito said.

Then, with a soft voice,

"If we're here after school today, then we'll talk."

He said.

He then started walking again.

And started making his way back to the student council room.

After which, he would once again face the world of the elves.

Perhaps, Gekkou was still in the midst of preparations with the higher ups of the << **Military** >>, if that's the case, he will make him let him participate in the preparations.

Taito had yet to meet anyone from the << **Military** >>, however, if they are willing to lend him a hand in saving Haruka, then it was only right that he should go greet them once. Besides, even if it was really not time for them to set out, Taito had a bunch of other things he needed to do.

So first of all for now.

"....."

For now, he would say goodbye to this ordinary routine life again.

The next time he comes back will be when he has brought Haruka back.

He turned around once.

The corridor was bustling with activity, with the students frantically coming and going between the lockers and classrooms in preparation of the next class which was about to start, and laughing amongst themselves over some private joke.

A normal, peaceful, ordinary high school student life was over there.

Taito gazed at that for a little while, and he once again started making his way back to the student council room.

♦

When he returned to the student council room, everyone was gathered.

Gathered around the long meeting table, were Himea, Mirai, and the president Gekkou.

Initially, when Himea saw him, her face was instantly lit up in happiness, but for some reason, she frantically wiped that happy look off her face and turned the other way.

Following that, Mirai said,

"Ah! Welcome back, Mr Immortal. Did you buy some Dr. Pepper?"

"Eh? Er no, you didn't ask."

"Eeh ~, you didn't buy ~. Then I shall go buy it myself. Gekkou, pocket money!"

"Buy me some cola as well."

"Alright."

Upon saying that, she snatched the change from Gekkou and left the room.

Taito then smiled wryly,

"I came back."

He said.

Gekkou then said,

"I didn't ask you to come back."

"Er no, yeah that's true though."

"We need some more time to make our preparations. After I told them that we're going to go see the elves, it caused an uproar among them."

Upon saying that, he signaled at his cellphone which was on the table with his eyes. It was vibrating.

"Aren't you taking the call?"

He asked to which Gekkou smiled,

"I'll tease them a little until someone important shows up. At any rate, the decision power doesn't lie with these peons."

He said.

With regards to these tactics, since Taito had never met the << **Military** >> before, he didn't quite understand so he left things to Gekkou for now.

From the first day he met him, he had been wondering for a while on why is this guy's personality so bad, but since then, he had witnessed the capabilities of this fella many times.

It was probably fine to leave things to him.

"Hey Himea, I have got a small request though."

Taito said.

"I'm not listening."

She said.

Taito then smiled wryly. Since he understood very well how she felt. Even for him, if a girl he likes were to try so hard for another man, he would feel really gloomy as well.

"You're angry?"

On hearing Taito's question, she shook her head.

"Nope."

"Then why are you facing the other way?"

Himea then said,

"..... I'm a little worried."

She said softly.

Taito smiled again, and just as he was about to say something,

"As I've said before, bring your melodrama to another place, I'm going to kick you guys out, you know?"

Gekkou said in an irritated voice. He then retrieved his cellphone from the desk. And pressed the 'accept' button,

"It's me. You should already have started preparing for the higher ups to meet me right? Huh? Don't shit with me. Tell them that I have no business with small fries. Bring me someone higher. I don't have much time here."

Such a conversation was started.

Taito swallowed the words he wanted to say earlier and went over to Himea's side,

"..... erm, Himea, there's something I want to of ask you which I want to keep a secret from Gekkou."

Following that, she finally turned around to face him,

"Hn?"

She said.

"Secret?"

"Yeah."

"What?"

On hearing that, he said. He said softly so that Gekkou, who was on the phone, couldn't hear.

"You know, I went to see the fella who Himea had asked to bring me back to life....."

At the instant he said that.

The color of Himea's face, which was originally a little peeved, changed. She stared intently up at him,

"You mean Edelka?"

"Yeah ~, yea. Probably that."

"Hey wait a minute, I didn't hear about that. That place..... that place is a place that should not be tread by humans."

On hearing her words, Taito recalled slightly the strange place called Edelka

That was probably the same day when Haruka was abducted. In order to acquire the power to protect Himea from the << **Tenma** >>, he had consulted Gekkou on the ways to train himself up.

After which Gekkou had opened a << **Way** >> to that place.

It was a strange place where any wish can be granted if one pays the price.

However, the person who makes the wish has no say in the price. The monster which was known as the Mistress of Edelka will grant the wish and help herself to the price.

And the price is a terrible one. It's so terrible that it will make one regret getting his or her wish fulfilled.

Nevertheless, Himea had asked for Taito's revival and consequently had her powers taken away.

The powers which she definitely could not afford to lose were taken away.

Because of that, the << **Tenma** >> appeared and tried to kill Himea. No, really, she would have been killed. And Himea was well aware of that.

She would die. She would disappear. She was well aware of that but yet, she did not hesitate in bringing him back to life.

"....."

This is troubesome, Taito thought. Since he did not know how he could return that debt and it was something a normal high school student would never have thought about.

But still, even so, if he could just be of some help to her, he would gladly acquire power.

In order to be able to protect her the next time she was faced with danger.

So that she would not cry in some place unknown to him, so that she could properly rely on him, he wanted to acquire power.

And thus, Gekkou had introduced him to the strange place which had a waving spectrum of seven colors.

Well, even after all the clamoring in Edelka, he still didn't manage to get hold of any power.

However, in place of that, he got hold of the intelligence on the locations of where power, magic, weapons can be found.

And in exchange of that, what kind of price had he paid? Right now, he still did not know, but in any case, currently, his mind was squirming with that massive amount of information.

It was like thousands of treasure maps getting forcefully pushed into his head.

Himea placed her worried face against Taito's chest,

"Don't tell me, don't tell me that you have asked for some wish?"

To which Taito nodded.

Himea was then on the verge of tears,

"You're kidding? You're kidding right? Why did you do such a thing.....?"

"Er but, it was not as bad as I thought. It's not like there's anything wrong with my body....."

But she cut him off,

"There's no way there could be nothing wrong!"

Himea yelled.

"Quiet! I'm on the phone."

Gekkou shouted angrily, but she didn't care.

"That freak would never grant a wish for free..... what should we do? If you die, then I....."

While saying that, she was already on the verge of collapsing, and Taito supported her and frantically said.

"No no no, I'm really fine. And besides, the wish I asked for was not something that big a deal....."

However, that was a lie.

The reason was because while the Mistress of Edelka was granting him his wish, she had said.

"If you think that the price for that wish is small, then you're making a big mistake."

And he had immediately realized the meaning behind those words.

Places where the magical beings with which he could contract resided.

Places where the magic he should learn were hidden.

Places where the weapons which he should find were hidden.

Numerous such pieces of information where **Power** could be obtained were delivered to his brain.

In exchange for that, he had lost something. And it was something really important to him. Even though he had yet to realize what that was, he knew that he had lost something extremely important.

And he thought that it was a matter of fact thing. Since that was how valuable the information he had acquired was.

Since Taito had gotten hold of the intelligence on the **Power** that was eagerly sought after by the << **Military** >> that was managing this school, no, by the organizations around the world.

And that's why he could not let Gekkou get a wind of this. He could not let the << **Military** >> get a wind of this.

Since that **Power** was what Taito desired for the sole purpose of protecting Himea.

As such, it was better for Taito to keep it secret without anyone else knowing.

It's better for no one else to discover this **Power** that can endanger people and the world.

So he asked.

"More importantly, Himea, you know."

"Hey, don't change the subject. Taito, do you really know what you did?"

"Er, yeah. I know, that's why there's something I need to ask you."

"That should be my line! Anyway, let's go to my room. I'll use my magic to screen your body....."

But, cutting her off, Taito said.

"Is there a way to use a << **Way** >> without Gekkou knowing? At Edelka, I asked for the way to obtain magic and weapons hidden in the world. But I have no way of getting there....."

In the instant he said that, she stopped moving. Her ebullient, deep crimson eyes looked up,

"..... the way to obtain magic and weapons?"

"Yeah."

"Which means."

"Yeah."

Taito nodded. But his acknowledgement was a little condescending in tone, and he hesitated a little.

It's because I wanted to protect you that I went to Edelka, he didn't want to say that in a condescending manner.

But, things didn't go that well. Himea was getting more and more teary. And she squeezed his chest.

"Why are you doing that for me....."

"Himea, you too went to that extent for me by going to Edelka right? It's only right for me to do the same."

"No way....."

She cut short what she wanted to say. And she embraced him.

Gekkou, on the other end, then picked up from the desk and threw the flask containing hot water at them, but Himea merely waved her hand. And with her magic, the flask was blown away and got lodged into the ceiling.

Gekkou gestured angrily at them, telling them to get out, while he talked to the << **Military** >> on his cellphone.

While Taito was on the verge of breaking into a smile, Himea said,

"..... jeez, Taito, you're really a dummy."

"And if you die again, what should I do....."

She said in a small voice.

She then trembled at what she said, and with her face on the verge of tears, she said,

"..... you did that for my sake?"

But Taito shook his head.

"No. I did it for my own sake. I don't want to feel pathetic for not being able to protect Himea."

"You aren't pathetic at all."

"Yes I am."

She then buried her face into Taito's chest,

"No you aren't. Every time..... whenever I feel unsettled, I get saved by you."

She said. She then hugged him even tighter.

And during that interval of time,

"....."

Gekkou kept glaring at them. His talk with the << **Military** >> over the phone did not seem to go well, and he was directing his anger and brunt towards the innocent couple.

Well, they might really be annoying, Taito smiled wryly. He then said,

"Ah ~, Himea."

"Huh?"

"Let's leave the student council room."

"Why?"

"Gekkou seems to be having his period."

On hearing that,

"Aah!?"

Gekkou said. Following that, he spoke into the phone,

"I'm not shouting at you. Enough of that, get it through to your boss. If you continue to move so sluggishly, I won't wait for your assessment and move on my own, you know?"

To which Taito said,

"You are always doing that though."

Of course, he said in a soft voice that was inaudible to Gekkou.

However, the issue at hand was so problematic that even the Gekkou who has always liked to act on his own, had to consult the << **Military** >>.

Between the elves and humans.

Even though he didn't know what kind of antagonism has existed between them, but it was definitely not something that was so shallowly entrenched that could be mended by others through words alone.

Taito recalled the angry, fearful face of that young female elf who had suddenly attacked him.

But Taito's mind was not on those things now. More importantly,

"So, about my question earlier, is it possible?"

He asked Himea.

Himea then looked up and answered softly.

"To use the power of the << **Holy Ground** >> here secretly without Gekkou knowing?"

"Yeah."

She made a somewhat complicated face and said.

"I wonder. The << **Holy Ground** >> here is a little different from what I know, it's a little strange."

"Strange."

"Yeah. Somehow, this thing listens to no one except for Gekkou. Normally, anyone who knows how to use it will be able to use it..... on top of that, it's so stubborn that when I penetrated the spell structure just once, it conversely tried to ki....."

At that juncture, her words stopped.

Taito cocked his head,

"Ki?"

"No. It's nothing ~. Anyway, it's tough. But, if it's not a must to use the one here, I do know of another << **Holy Ground** >>."

"Eh? Really?"

"Yeah. Though it's not as powerful as the one here which can connect to any dimension..... But if you just want to warp a short distance away, there's a place which is controlled by me."

"Then, if I go there..."

On hearing Taito's words, Himea nodded hesitantly.

"Yeah. Maybe it's possible to go to a location which you know of the mass of information you got hold of. But, it's also possible that you can't. Since the << **Ways** >> created by this << **Holy Ground** >> can't connect to everywhere..... it'll be difficult if the place you want to go to is too far away."

"But, there's a possibility."

"Yeah."

"That's great then. It's not like I'm seeking all the powers. If I can just get a little stronger than I am now....."

I'll be able to protect Himea, and also become useful in bringing back Haruka.

"So Himea, can I get to the << **Holy Ground** >> you're managing right now?"

She nodded.

"I've set a rift in that park which can transport you to the << **Holy Ground** >>."

She said.

When she said 'that park', she probably meant that. The park where the two of them played together, creating memories, when they were still children.

"Well then, let's go."

On hearing that, she nodded.

"So it's fine to go there right now?"

"It's fine."

"I see."

Taito then turned his sight back to Gekkou,

"Hey Gekkou."

He said.

Gekkou then glowered at him and said.

"I'm on the phone."

"I can see that."

"If you can see that, don't talk to me. And also, you are an eyesore. Quickly get out."

"Er, I'm getting out but, before that, can you tell me something?"

"What?"

"How much longer do you think it will take? I have something to take care of....."

"That's why I'm telling you to quickly disappear. It'll take some more time."

"How much longer?"

"A few days."

"Huh? Do you need that long? Are you an idiot?"

Gekkou scowled again on hearing that, and turned his attention back to the phone,

"See, even the real idiots can tell how idiotic it is to have these few days freed up with this situation, how useless can you guys be?"

He scolded. And the person on the other side of the phone started speaking.

Taito looked at him for a while, then said.

"Himea."

She then acknowledged.

"Are you going to the park?"

"Yeah."

"With just the two of us going to the park again, somehow, it seems like a date ~"

Himea's face started beaming with excitement, but Taito shook his head,

"No, you can't leave this school. I've said this many times, but since various people are after you, you can't leave the school."

Eeeeehhhh ~, she then said with a very dissatisfied face.

But, not bothered by it, Taito continued,

"And besides, you just said that anyone can operate the << **Holy Ground** >> if he know how right? In that case, there's no need for you to leave this school right?"

Himea then looked up at him desperately,

"There is!"

She said.

Taito then made a troubled smile,

"Ah, I understand how cooped up you must be feeling for not being able to get out of the school after all this while."

"Yeah. Then, it's fine right? And besides, I just went to the elf world right?"

"Ah, you're right."

"Yup yup. So let's go to the park together....."

But Taito shook his head.

"But, I still think it's better not to. Earlier, Gekkou and Mirai were with us, but if it's me alone, I don't have the confidence that I can protect you."

"I'll protect you!"

"Er no, there won't be any meaning to this then."

Upon saying that, Taito smiled.

"But, this time round, if I can power up like Hulk, and can protect you with my muscles, we can go on a date and I'll take you anywhere you want."

But still, she pouted with a discontented face,

"What's Hulk?"

"A superhero from the American comics, but well, you won't know of it."

"I don't. And it's not interesting at all ~."

"You mean about not being able to go on a date?"

"Yes."

"But won't you spare me this time? I'll really become stronger this time."

After saying that,

"Well, I'll be going. I don't know when Gekkou will call for us to go to the world of elves again, so I better get it done quickly."

But still, with a bored face, Himea then said,

"Then, just go."

She said.

"Well, sulking aside, can you teach me how to use the << **Holy Ground** >>....."

But, at that moment, Himea raised her hand. And struck Taito's chest. Following that,

"I authorize this person to represent me."

Upon saying that, her hand started to glow. And the light went inside of Taito.

"Alright, with this, you're connected to the << **Holy Ground** >>. Taito is going to leave me here all alone at this school and go use the << **Holy Ground** >> all by himself."

"Er, well, like I said..."

"It's fine it's fine, I'm also going to go play with some other man."

While saying that, she stepped away from Taito. While pouting, she started making her way out of the room.

But Taito did not go after her. He looked at the back of her sulking figure. He looked at the departing figure that was sulking like she was in the past when while acting willfully, and smiled.

Following that, he looked at Gekkou who was still on the phone, and after that, he ascertained the time on the clock hanging on the wall, which indicated that it was still yet to be noon.

"In any case, I plan to be back by evening."

Upon saying that, Gekkou covered part of his cellphone,

"If anything comes up, I'll call you. Until then, don't come back."

"Erm, but you know. You never know when something might happen, so I'll be back."

After saying that, Taito followed after the departing figure of Himea, and left the student council room.

♦

After ascertaining that Taito had left, Gekkou said.

"".....you want to send in a supervisor? Don't shit with me. We can resolve the matter ourselves."

The woman-in-charge on the other side of the phone then replied.

"But the higher-ups have already decided....."

"I thought I told you to let me talk with those higher-ups."

*"That's not possible. The higher-ups are normally at a distance away from the student council room. Besides, the << **Military** >> has judged that the matter this time is beyond your capabilities to handle them. So they will dispatch a supervisor."*

"No need for that."

"That's not for you to decide."

"Don't be stupid. In the first place, what do you plan to do in sending an old fart who's above eighteen years old? An old geezer can't use the power of the << **Holy Ground** >>, you know??"

"I'm only responsible for telling you the judgement of the higher-ups, as to why they have decided to dispatch a supervisor, you'd have to ask the supervisor yourself."

"Sigh. At any rate, some useless fella will be coming right? And I need to beat the crap out of the fella until he's half-dead before I can talk to the higher-ups huh? Jeez, it's really a waste of time talking to idiots. It'd be faster I go there directly....."

However, as if to cut him off, a voice on the other side of the phone answered.

"That will not be necessary. I'll be right before you in a moment."

It was not the voice of the woman-in-charge earlier, but the voice of a man.

On hearing that, Gekkou's eyes narrowed.

"Who's that?"

He said.

And the man replied.

*"I'm the supervisor dispatched by the << **Military** >>. Right now, I'm behind you, so is it okay to hang up the phone?"*

Gekkou turned around. As he turned around, he attempted to strike whoever was behind him with the hand that was holding the phone.

However, that hand was readily stopped.

A man stood there. His age was probably around twenty four, twenty five? Wearing a black suit and a red tie. As well as a formal hat which one would only see in mafia movies of the 60s, and a pair of round glasses. A white glove. That gloved hand was the one which had grabbed hold of Gekkou's arm.

Glaring at that man, Gekkou said.

"You really have bad taste."

"Haha, I've always been told that. About creeping up on people from behind."

But Gekkou smiled,

"No. I'm referring to your fashion taste."

"Do you dislike my suit? But someday, you'll be wearing it. All adults wear it."

While saying that, he went on to further push against Gekkou with his gloved arm.

Gekkou's face frowned at that. Even though he was resisting with quite a tremendous amount of strength, it seemed like there was no effect on his opponent.

Of course, while victory or defeat cannot be determined just from brute strength alone, after getting the space behind him taken so easily, he needed to do something to take the initiative and get hold of an advantageous position.

That's why Gekkou tried to pull back his arm once, and along with his opponent's arm, draw him in and aim for his face.

The man then smiled. With a speed many times faster than Gekkou's attack, he released his grip.

Gekkou was shocked. The man's fist came flying with an agility which he was clearly unable to counteract,

"Damn."

He groaned. He braced himself to take the blow. He would endure the blow and somehow try to land a blow to the man's face, he thought.

However, just before the man's fist reached Gekkou's face, for some reason, it opened softly. And with that open hand, as if an adult was 'educating' his child, he hit Gekkou's cheek.

Pah, a dull noise rang out from his cheek. As a result,

"....."

Gekkou was unable to move.

He looked at that man's face.

Looking intently at the cheerfully smiling face of the man,

"....."

I'll definitely kill him, he thought.

The man then said to him,

"Don't be so angry. You're just a high school freshman, so no need to feel ashamed of yourself for losing to me. Besides, the << **Military** >> has assessed you to be much more capable than me when I was the student council president, so in fact, you should feel proud of yourself, you know?"

Gekkou's eyes narrowed a little.

"..... you were the student council president.....? In other words, you were....."

The man nodded.

"Counting from you, I was the president from seven generations ago."

"Hmm. So, what is the antique from the past doing here?"

"Well, I'm here to greet you."

"Greet me?"

"Yes. Rather, well, I'll explain the situation yo you, erm, where should I start ~"

Upon saying that, the man folded his arms. Following that, with his fingers, he adjusted his hat, as well as his glasses.

Gekkou wanted to kick into the center of those glasses, but his body didn't move.

He was unsure as to how he could move in order to assault his opening.

That was how unprepared the man seemed to be.

Even though his physique was not so different from his own, his build and movements also didn't seem to that much different from his own, but somehow, there was something unknown about this man.

At that moment, the man continued.

"Well, anyway, the << **Military** >> has high expectations from you. Anyhow, after ten years, a child who is more talented than me has appeared. The presidents for the past ten years had been terribly useless. Even when faced with relatively weak magical beings, they just kept dying easily on us, making the executives of the << **Military** >> feel really vexed. But, at last, someone who is useful beyond expectations has appeared. However, because of the power he holds, he's a little too willful....."

Upon saying that, the round glasses turned towards Gekkou, and the man smiled.

In response to his gaze, Gekkou glowered at him.

"So, you're here to discipline me?"

"That's right."

"That's unnecessary."

"That's not for you to decide."

"Really?"

"Yeah."

"But I'm not going to listen to the likes of....."

However, the man smiled.

"Yes, you will. In this world....."

At that moment, the man moved. His fist moved. That fist was flying towards Gekkou.

Gekkou brushed it off with his left hand. There was no way he would allow himself to get hit again and again,

"....."

But, in the next instant, his sight was blinded with a light.

Even though he knew that light was a result of him getting hit, it remained for a while.

He was sure that he had brushed off the man's hand, but yet, for some reason, his face got hit and he was sent flying backwards. His back struck the meeting desk, but he didn't stopped there, together with the flying desk, he fell onto the floor.

"In this world, the weak ones obey the strong ones. And also, children should listen to adults."

On hearing that,

"..... don't make me puke."

Gekkou said while lying on the ground. However, those were words he managed to utter at long last with some effort. With his head still spinning, he was unable to get up immediately. If another attack came on top of that, he would probably be killed easily.

He couldn't.

"....."

He couldn't believe that he was more capable than this fella during his high school time. As the thought about that, he felt utterly humiliated.

However, unconcerned with Gekkou's feelings, the man continued.

"Well, the people who can become the student council presidents of this school can't be normal people, and the willful streak is something the << **Military** >> is not too concerned with. That's why I came here because of another reason."

"....."

"This was what the << **Miltiary** >> said. You are an unpolished diamond that has the possibility of completely controlling this << **Holy Ground** >>. It is thus necessary to treasure you properly. So in order to not have you killed by mistake in the manner exemplified by your current perilous situation, I've come here to educate you."

"....."

"I was told to make you stronger than me by the middle of this year. Without getting you killed by meaningless stuff, I'm supposed to bring you up to my level. That's why I was dispatched here to become your supervisor."

"....."

"So, I'm supposed to educate you in the near future, but I thought I should come here to greet you first."

Upon saying that, the man took off his hat. Placing it against his chest, he lowered his head as if to mock Gekkou.

Gekkou looked up. At last, the spinning in his head started to fade, and his body moved. Then,

"I'll kill you."

He said.

The man laughed,

"If you are able to do that, I'm sure the << **Military** >> will be pleased. Ah, more importantly, I haven't introduced myself yet. My name is Kurosu. Kurosu Philier Yuuichi. A mixed blood pretty man."

He laughed upon saying that.

"So, while I appeared to be sent here to fulfill the role of a health education teacher like in Shoujo manga, but unfortunately, I'm an English teacher. If you don't understand anything in your English classes, feel free to ask me."

He said.

While Gekkou didn't quite get the last part about Shoujo manga, the man called Kurosu quickly turned on his heel.

"Now that I've given my greeting, I should perhaps leave. Ah, with regards to the matter of Shigure Haruka, there is no need for you to get involved. Since the adult matters with the elves are messy and complicated. Just leave things to us."

But Gekkou said to those words,

"Don't decide for me on your own....."

However, in the middle of his words, Kurosu spun and raised his foot. And with the heel of that foot, he stopped onto Gekkou's stomach.

"Guah."

He groaned out. Furthermore, his face was kicked. With the force of that blow, he rolled along the floor.

Kurosu laughed again,

"Well, let me give you the first word of advice as an adult. As a high school student, if you think you are the most unfortunate, most powerful, smartest person in the world, you are very much mistaken. I guess you have such a thought since right from the beginning, this country has not enough of despair in it..... but, you are mistaken. If I am to borrow your own words, you are still a small fry. If you don't have the power, just go tremble in the corner of the room. If not, you'll die easily, you know?"

He said.

With that, Kurosu started walking. He started leaving the student council room. At the same time, with their paths about to cross each other, Mirai was making her way back.

Kurosu then said to Mirai,

"Hey hey, don't run along the corridor."

Don't talk to that guy, Gekkou wanted to say to Mirai. But no words came out. Because of the terrible damage inflicted from the kick on his face, he couldn't move.

Mirai looked up at Kurosu,

"..... huh ~? Who are you?"

She said.

Kurosu smiled faintly,

"I'm a teacher."

"What are you doing here?"

"What teachers do is to teach of course."

"Teach?"

"Yup. To properly guide our youths into society, a passionate education is needed. So, you shouldn't run along the corridor as well."

"Eh ~, why?"

"It'll be dangerous if you fall right?"

"Ah, I see!"

"That's right. You understand right?"

"Yup."

""I see. You're a good kid different from Kurenai-kun."

"Ooooooorhh, I got praised! Gekkou, did you hear that? Hear that? I'm a good kid!"

Upon saying that, Mirai entered the student council room.

With that, Kurosu left with a smile on his face.

Mirai looked around the room, searching for Gekkou.

Seeing the overturned desk, and the fallen Gekkou on the other side, her face turned to one of surprise.

"Wh-What has happened?"

On hearing that,

"....."

Gekkou said nothing.

Mirai approached him with a worried look on her face.

However,

"..... where's my cola?"

Asked Gekkou. Mirai's face suddenly became fearful,

"Ah, er."

She trembled.

Gekkou looked intently at her.

He looked at the demon who was wearing a sailor uniform, pretending to be a high school student.

Her right hand held on to a Dr. Pepper.

Her left hand was also holding on to a Dr. Pepper.

"This useless idiotic demon."

Said Gekkou.

With a fearful face, Mirai said,

"B-But, this really tastes good. I thought Gekkou can give it a try."

Gekkou then sat up. He searched for a spot to lean against, and propped his body against the wall. He then sighed out softly, and extended his hand.

"..... well fine. Hand me that."

Upon saying that, Mirai's face lit up.

"Orh ~, you're going to drink it? You're going to drink it?"

She handed over the Dr. Pepper to him.

Gekkou took it and opened the pulltab, then put it to his mouth. For some reason, the inside of his mouth appeared to be cut, and the carbonic acid poured over the wound. However, unconcerned with that, Gekkou gulped the drink.

Mirai then said,

"Hey hey hey, it tastes good right!"

In response to that face that seemed to say that it's impossible for it to taste bad, Gekkou said,

"..... yeah."

He gave a suitable response.

He then averted his eyes from her. And looked up at the ceiling. He was exasperated at the gradually increasing pain that he was starting to feel.

He couldn't do anything about it. The guys at the << **Military** >> who had pretended not to have any complaints at the things Gekkou did up till now, had finally started to move.

Of course, he had never once thought that he was the strongest person in this world, and can defeat any kind of enemy while laughing at them for being small fries.

Since right from his birth, he had a twin brother who was more capable than him, so there was no way he would have thought like that.

But, still, to get beaten like in a one-sided match like that.

"....."

At that moment,

"Gekkou."

Said Mirai.

With a slightly unreserved, seemingly worried voice,

"..... erm, about that, it's okay. You can win next time, you haven't yet lost as long as you haven't gotten killed, that's what Mama had said....."

She said.

The idiot demon, who was still a brat and was clueless about the common sense in the human world, said to him in a concerned voice.

"....."

Gekkou became even more irritated. He became more irritated at his worthless self that had even caused worry to such a brat. No, a demon would no doubt be dissatisfied with a contracted master who was reduced to such an unbecoming state, he thought.

Gekkou remained quiet, and as a result, Mirai, who appeared to become even more troubled, said.

"Ah, Gekkou, were you angry with what I said as well? Er, then, erm....."

But, cutting her off, he said.

"No, it's like what you said. I didn't lose. As long as I don't die."

Mirai became relieved,

"That's right!"

And raised both her hands.

"As long as we win the next time!"

She said optimistically with her cheerful face.

Looking at the face of that girl that could never stay gloomy, a tired smile surfaced on Gekkou's lips. With that, he held out his hand,

"Mirai."

"Hn ~?"

"Lend me your hand. I can't stand up."

"Okkayy ~!"

And she helped him up. As he stood up with her support, he said.

"That's all for today. Let's go back. Let's go back and sleep, and then decide our next move."

"Alroight."

"Those fools, in this world, the weak obey the strong? You make me puke. If so....."

If so, I would have already been killed, Gekkou murmured softly.

Without getting forced to paw at the ground in such a shameful manner, he would have been killed by his little brother, and disappeared, he thought.

That's why a smile surfaced on him,

"..... just you wait. I'll not do as you wish. The master of this student council room..... is me."

After saying that, he connected a << **Way** >> to his room, and went home.

Chapter 3 - The Spell Bite of Deep Entwinement

Exiting by the backdoor of the school, passing through the residential area towards the north, was where the park was.

The park where he played with Himea everyday.

During that time, Taito was still in his lower elementary years.

"..... I wonder how old Himea is?"

He murmured.

Since, in truth, she seemed to have lived for eons, since the first time they met, perhaps, to her, not much time had passed.

But to him, it already felt like a long time ago.

During these nine years, maybe it was also due to the fact that he had forgotten about her, his memories of the time then seemed to be like a movie he had watched, and didn't feel like they were really a part of him.

That's why the only memories he had about playing in this park, was when he had fell off the swing when he was in elementary six and Haruka had taken him to the hospital, as well as during his first year in middle school, when he and Haruka wanted to play with fireworks and got mad, normal memories like those.

"I have never thought that this would be a place where Himea had connected a << **Way** >> to the << **Holy Ground** >> she made."

He murmured.

So as to speak, he had never imagined that his life would turn out to be so extraordinary as if he were inside a manga.

He looked around the park.

In the park were a swing, sandpit, and iron bar.

Some time ago, there used to be a jungle gym, but now, it was not there.

When Gekkou's twin little brother, Hinata, went on a rampage here, it disappeared. However, since no kids played here, even if the jungle gym had disappeared, no one would have realized it.

"No, well, that can't be the case though."

Probably, either Gekkou or the << **Military** >> had taken action so that no one realized it, he thought. Well, at any rate, it would have been better if they could have rebuilt the jungle gym, he thought.

But well, that didn't really matter now.

Anyway,

"I wonder where is the << **Holy Ground** >> that Himea had hidden."

He took a step into the park.

He thought as usual that perhaps due to the fact that there is a larger park nearby, this park isn't really popular. No kids played here, there were neither couples nor the homeless.

It was kind of rare for a place in this town to be that desolate.

Isn't it then the perfect place to hide something, he thought.

And,

"Where is the thing that's hidden?"

He said.

However, even as he said that, he already more or less knew where the exact location was. Since coming here, he could feel that a tug from within the recesses of his chest.

It was probably the reaction of that something which Himea had given him earlier, he thought.

Following the guidance of the tug in his body, he walked. Passing the sandpit, passing by the side of the public toilet, on the side of the swing.

When he reached that point,

"Do you want to open the door?"

A voice resounded in his head. It was not a sound, but a voice that reverberated directly in his head. On hearing that, Taito nodded, and *open*, he was about to say. Following that, he could feel some nerve in his brain appearing to move on its own volition, and then, from his mouth,

"**.....**"

An unknown voice which was not even audible to himself sounded.

He was surprised at that. Somehow, it seemed like he was uttering some kind of magical incantation,

"..... somehow, it feels like my whole body has been totally remodeled by Himea....."

He smiled wryly as he said that.

Following that, he looked ahead.

A dimensional rift that resembled the one he saw on the wall of the student council room started to open in midair.

What was beyond that was a small white room. A narrow room that seemed like a tight fit if two people were to enter it.

There was nothing in that room. And Taito entered that empty room.

Following that, he looked at the scenery of the park that was behind him through the dimensional rift,

"If I close this, will I still be able to come back?"

He asked.

Then, from inside of his head,

"This << Way >> is maintained by a higher authority than you. You are unable to change the coordinate values of it."

"In other words..... ah ~, even if I close it, I can still open a << **Way** >> to the park right?"

"Yes."

"Then it's fine then. Just in case some kid comes wandering into the << **Way** >> by mistake....."

Close it, he wanted to say, and once again, his head started swimming again. He could feel his brain matter appearing to be forcibly using some special kind of power, and then,

"....."

Taito's mouth chanted the incantation.

The rift closed. The scenery of the park disappeared. His field of vision was covered in complete whiteness.

"Uwah, this whiteness makes me feel dizzy."

He moaned. Following that,

"So, that's it right. Whenever I'm giving an order, I will start speaking something that resembled magic right?"

Even when he asked that, it appeared that the room would not engage in such idle conversation. Taito then shrugged his shoulders. Does Gekkou speak to the << **Holy Ground** >> in the student council room? He wondered and tried imagining it in his head.

So as to speak, earlier, Himea talked about the << **Holy Ground** >> in the student council room being stubborn and would only listen to Gekkou, perhaps each and every one of them had its own personality.

"I don't really know much about magic though....."

However, he could not go on like this, he thought.

If he wants to continue staying by Himea's side and protect her, he could not go on like this anymore, he thought.

When he thought of Haruka getting abducted by the elves, and the school getting destroyed by invading monsters, he could no longer afford to go on like this.

At the very least, he should possess the same level of knowledge as Gekkou. That fellow was also human and also a high school freshman brat.

Then, even him.

Even me.....

"..... er, well, anyway, for the school tests, if I can't even get half the marks as him, it might be tough to acquire the same level of knowledge....."

He quickly became discouraged, but still, he couldn't afford not to do anything.

So, for now,

"Right now, I need to obtain the power I need most."

He thought.

Following that, in his head, he started bringing up the information which he had gotten from the monster in the place called Edelka.

That information was certainly strange; it should be data inside his own head, but yet, the data itself asked him,

"Which piece of information do you want to access?"

A picture of a map surfaced on its own. However, that was not a normal map. It was like a map which seemed to record the positions of the stars, like a map of heavenly bodies, and steadily, it spread both horizontally and vertically, however, in the midst of it, suddenly, *snap*, he could hear the bursting sounds of his blood vessels.

His vision was filled with darkness and he fell. Of course, with the power conferred by Himea, the damage received in his brain was healed, but, clearly, he had died once just now.

"Hey hey, don't shit with....."

But, Taito's words were interrupted by the voice in his head.

"There was a resource error while loading ten percent of the information. Due to the overload, the spell-user's brain experienced a meltdown. The load sequence has been amended to load less than ten percent of the information next time."

"Wait, huh!? Meltdown? You mean like cooling!? Having my brains dissolved? You're kidding right? Seriously, it's like my body isn't really my body anymore!"

He grumbled.

During this time, he once again realized the terribleness of the place called Edelka.

If Taito didn't have his immortality power, he would have just died like that. There was not even time for him to complain. If you were to look at the entire database of information, you will die you know? Never was such a question posed to him, and he would just end up dying like that.

Was there anything more stupid than this?

"Hey, there is, since I just died duh....."

After muttering that, in any case, for now, he would look at the data, which did not even constitute ten percent of the information he had, loaded into his head.

Once again, the voice sounded.

"Which piece of information will you like to access?"

"Even if you tell me that, what kind of information is available and how can I access it, at least explain that to me."

However,

"....."

There was no reply to his question.

"Jeez, how unfriendly! Is that all to the magic? In that case, I don't really feel like I have invoked any at all, you know?"

Even as he grumbled, no one answered him. So, after sighing out softly,

"Ah ~, well here goes. I don't want something as powerful as the power of the Tenma Martes Devil, but some technique or magic or weapon which I can use anytime without much risk."

Upon saying that, the map which had suddenly surfaced in his mind started moving. Meanwhile, his head gradually became hotter, and more painful. Taito then said,

"Wooaaahhhh, crap, really, really, my brain seems to be melting....."

And at that moment, the map stopped moving.

"Oh, it stopped."

"Search completed. Displaying the candidates which match the search criteria."

"Horh! You are surprisingly useful!"

As he said that, countless number of spots on the map started glowing,

"With the search condition of { < Flames of the Tenma Martes Devil }, the total sealed locations found are two hundred and seventy-eight thousand, three hundred....."

"Erm no, I can't choose from that many."

But, the voice continued without paying him any heed.

"And forty-two. To bring up the details of each location, please make your selection."

"No, erm, like I said ~"

"......"

"Eehhh, well, what. Well, I mean, since you seem to be useful, can you choose one for me?"

"Resource error."

"Like I said, I can't choose from so many! Well then, let's go for a near one. The closest one....."

"Resource error."

"I'm going to kick your ass....."

"Resource error."

"Uwah, wasn't that one a little strange? It's clearly mocking me right?"

"......"

However, there was no longer any further reply. Taito then breathed out a sigh,

"Ah ~, well then, fine. I will choose an appropriate one. Even if I obtain only powers which I can't use, I won't know it right? Is that really ok? Well of course it's ok! You aren't me anyway!"

While going back and forth himself in a moronic way, he went on to pick an appropriate one in his head,

"Hmm, how do I select it? Erm, if I just think about it....."

At that moment, one of the sealed locations among them lit up.

Upon doing that, he could feel the detailed explanations of that location surging into his mind,

"With this, the invocation will be terminated."

The voice said. And the map disappeared. Then, for the first time, he realized that he could not see the scenery outside of where he was.

With his full consciousness concentrated on looking at the data, he couldn't even tell what kind of face he was making.

Well, if he was using his brain faculties desperately to the point it melted, he had to be making a idiotic face all this while, he thought.

And once again, his consciousness returned to the white room,

"..... somehow, I feel like I'm starting to hate magic....."

He said.

He then looked around the white room.

"Erm, is this << **Holy Ground** >> still moving?"

He asked.

"This place is controlled by an authority higher than yours. You are unable to....."

"Aah geez, I know that already....."

"Move it."

"Haah, is that so?"

"......"

"Well then, ah ~, that."

He started referring to the initial part of the data that was stuffed into his head.

"The coordinates are Kelalno-Kela-Kraz-Eluohlo. Though I have no idea what that exactly is. Can we go to that place?"

The voice then replied.

"It's within range. Do you want to open a << Way >>?"

"Yeah."

Open, Taito wanted to say, and again, the same thing happened. He gave an 'Open' order to the << **Holy Ground** >> in a language he did not know.

But, this time round, things seemed different. Was it because he was already used to using that magic in his head, or was it because his brain has melted once, despite the fact that it was obvious that the normal usage command word was no Japanese,

"Open."

Was what he heard.

Then, before him, a rift started opening.

While the rift was opening, Taito pondered about the information which was stuffed into Taito's head earlier.

Well, rather, even when he thought 'ponder', it sounded a little odd since those were not his memories, and it would be a little odd to say that he had recalled them, so what should it be, erm, and he became confused.

Well, let's just use ponder for now.

The data that appeared after the coordinates.

What was at the place he was going to, what kind of power it possesses, what kind of risks are involved, and above all that, how could he obtain it?

He wanted to ascertain that.

As he did that, a flood of information surged in and for the moment, he couldn't understand every single thing, so for now, he read the first few lines, and they said the following.

Coordinates Kelalno-Kela-Kraz-Eluohlo.

The familiar of the spell-user Fehnolz, sealed in the labyrinth hell of Brans for his crime of destroying seven Alga, the magical beast Vishob Eleranka, is waiting for its contractor.

In order to make a contract with Vishob Eleranka.....

When he read till that point,

"..... erm, there's so much katakana that I don't really get it though..... but, wait a minute. Isn't the word 'magical beast' written inside?"

Said Taito.

"It's neither magic nor weapon, but a magical beast? Making a contract with a magical beast....."

At that moment, the dimensional rift opened.

On the other side of the rift, it was completely dark and he couldn't see a thing.

The only thing that came out of that darkness was a voice. Another voice that reverberated in his head. That voice said,

"Hahahahaha, fool. A blockhead has come to undo my seal. While you're at it, I'll have your body as my food."

It said.

Following that, with a solid voice,

"ROOAARRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR!!"

The roar of a gigantic ferocious beast could be heard.

It was a voice which could have paralyzed any herbivore, causing them to tremble.

Then, from the darkness, two lights appeared.

Golden, feline, piercing eyes. Those eyes looked at Taito. As if they had sighted a prey, they looked at Taito.

"Er, well, wait a minute, I say. A magical beast enters the stage all of a sudden? I'm not mentally prepared yet....."

At that moment, the beast's eyes narrowed.

"There's no need for any preparations. A prey just needs to let itself get eaten."

Upon saying that, it moved. From the darkness, with a tremendous momentum, it entered the white room.

Then, looking at the figure of that beast.

As Taito looked at that figure,

"....."

Taito said without thinking,

"Isn't this just a normal cat!"

However, ignoring him, *roar*, the cat opened its mouth and came attacking him. That was no ordinary cat. It was a kitten. No, it might even be smaller than a kitten.

A kitten that had glossy, beautiful black fur.

As the black cat was about to sink its teeth into him, Taito raised his hand,

"Oryha."

He chopped towards its face.

And the cat ate that blow easily,

"Fugya."

It said. And dropped down. Not showing any of the special agility only exhibited by cats, it fell onto the ground with a thud, and stopped moving.

Without thinking,

"You're joking right. Don't tell me it's dead!?"

Taito said worriedly, thinking that it had taken a lot of damage.

But the cat looked up. And in a mortified voice,

"D-Damn..... if only..... if only I still had my master, then I'd have finished you off in one blow."

It said, to which Taito looked down at it,

"..... hm. Master, you said, ah ~, who was it again? I'm not good with remembering katakana..... a fella known as spell-user Fehnolz?"

But the cat shook its head.

"That's just a blockhead who got caught by an organization known as the << Church >>. Of all my past contractors, he's the biggest blockhead of them all-Ni..... if I haven't made a contract with that fella, I'd still be a thing to be exalted in the world-Ni."

Upon saying that, Taito said,

"Erm, I can see that many things have happened, but before that, there's one thing I'm really curious about, so can I ask you about that?"

"What is it-Ni?"

"Well, you know, why do you have to end your sentences with a 'Ni'? Are you from Nagoya?"

"Nagoya? What's that-Ni?"

"Well, never mind..... well erm, then, about that. If you form a contract with someone who's not a blockhead, you'll be something useful, you mean?"

He wanted to ask, but decided against it.

Even if he didn't ask, the information about this fella should be inside his head. So, he proceeded to read it.

Somehow, even though it is a magical beast, it is not really physically powerful. Instead, it resides in the body of its contracted master, and provides mana to its master.

And there were two magic spells that could be used.

Iyz and Ska'rz.

Iyz is a magic that allows the user to see in completely dark places that are devoid of light.

"Hey, this might come in handy. But it's really not an attacking magic though. Isn't there any magic which I can substitute the flames of Tenma Martes Devil to slay my enemies?"

While saying that, Taito read on.

The second magic --- Ska'rz.

The explanation of that power is as follows.

The Deep Curse of a Cat.

"Er no, that doesn't sound useful at all!"

Taito groaned out involuntarily.

He then looked at the seemingly useless cat which was sprawled on the ground.

"Erm, you are Vishob right?"

On hearing that question, the sprawled cat said.

"Don't call my name so familiarly when we've just met-Ni."

"Ah, so that's your name. Well then, Eleranka?"

"Do-Ni call me by my name."

"Do-Ni? Hey, which is it? To call or not to call?"

"I'm hungry."

"..... you're hungry? Shall I buy you some cat food?"

The cat looked up as if to say, don't be an idiot,

"Give me your blood-Ni. If you are willing to give me ten liters of your blood daily, I'll form a contract with you-Ni."

"I'll definitely die from that right?"

Upon saying that, the cat suddenly became disappointed,

"Aah, after looking at you closely, you're a human-Ni. Then, it's impossible to form a contract with me."

After saying that, its head drooped.

While looking at that unusual scene of a kitten hanging its head in disappointment, Taito went on to further examine the information in his head.

In order to make a contract with Vishob Eleranka. Agree to provide three liters of magic-imbued bodily fluids to him daily.

Upon reading reading that, Taito's eyes half-closed.

Why the hell this fella blew it up to ten liters? Isn't three liters enough to form a contract? He looked down at the kitten with suspicion,

"..... erm, is it ok if it's three liters?"

He said, but, the cat did not even look up.

"Even if it's that amount, a human won't be able to....."

"Er no, I'm a little special you see, I think it's possible. You can go ahead and try killing me. Since I'm immortal."

He said.

"Immortal?"

"Yeah."

"But, you don't look like one who could use such a high level magic-Ni."

"Sorry for looking like an idiot."

"T-Then, you won't die even if I suck your blood-Nya?"

"Hey you! Did you just say 'Nya'?"

But the kitten did not hear that.

"In that case....."

"You definitely said it! You said it! That was not Nagoya dialect, but cat language....."

Nya: 'Nya', is the Japanese equivalent of 'Meow'.

"If you are such an interesting human, then it's a different story-Ni!"

Upon saying that, the cat leaped up from the ground. It leaped up from the ground in an energetic fashion different from before. It opened its mouth, and was about to sink its fangs into Taito's head.

Once again, Taito readily wanted to send a chop at it,

"....."

But, he gave up.

Was there really a point to give up three liters of blood daily and form a contract with such a weak looking kitten? He questioned himself, but well, it was better than having nothing, and he lowered his hand.

Funya!, the cat hollered and thrust itself into the center of his head.

"Eh, aren't you using your teeth?"

By the time he said that, the cat had already entered his body. So as to speak, it was written in his 'database' that this is a parasitic creature, he recalled.

With that,

"I shall have your blood-Ni."

The cat said.

Instantly, *dokun*, he could feel a pulsation at a place which was not where his heart was. He could feel a bodily function critical to life fail.

"....."

Taito couldn't say anything in response.

It was probably an instant death. With that, he dropped to the ground, on his knees. However, just as he dropped down, the blood he had lost started forming again. And the blood that was reformed was pumped around the body by the heart once more,

"Fyhh ~, I've died once."

Taito said while getting back on his feet.

Upon doing that, the voice inside his head sounded again.

"You're really immortal-Ni."

"I've already told you that right?"

"You really are an interesting fella-Ni."

"Your cat-speak is the interesting one though."

"Whatever-Ni. I'll accept you as my master-Ni. From now on, on a daily basis, whenever you are going to give me blood, just call my name-Ni."

Upon saying that, Taito said.

"Well then, I'll call you Nyankichi."

"That's not my name-Ni."

"But your name is full of katakana, and it's hard to remember. And on top of that, you should end your sentences with Nya..... wait, well, I don't really care about that though. In any case, since I've formed a contract with you, I have to test the powers available to me. Erm, take it as practice....."

But, as he said that, Nyankichi popped out from Taito's chest. Compared to before, its stomach was bloated and appeared to be a little fat.

With a seemingly satiated look on its face, it dropped down to the ground, rolled over, and started making its way back to its own world through the dimensional rift.

"Erm, are you planning to go back?"

Said Taito.

Without turning around, Nyankichi said,

"I've already formed a contract with you through your blood-Ni. When you want to invoke my powers, I'll be summoned into your blood, and can appear where ever you are."

"Hehh, is that how it works?"

"That's how it works-Ni."

"I see. Then you can go back. Thanks for your contract."

"Right. Farewell-Ni."

Upon saying that, Nyankichi passed through the rift and disappeared back into the darkness.

Taito then thought about using his newly contracted familiar, Nyankichi's powers.

The thing called Iyz is for seeing into the darkness.

As to how to invoke, erm, what is it again? Is it alright to just shout 'Iyz'?

And he attempted it.

A strange sound then escaped from his lips.

"Iyz."

Different from usual, the spell was invoked with a strange echo.

Instantly, on top of his head, a black light appeared. Nyankichi was then summoned and with a plod, sat on his head.

"Nya!"

Nyankichi said all of a sudden, and the darkness that filled the other side of the dimensional rift was bright as day.

It was a graveyard. Even though he didn't know what kind of creatures were buried there, there were many huge gravestones lined up.

To explain it clearly, having Nyankichi riding on top of his head making himself look like a blockhead, and illuminating the dark graveyard made feel him a little edgy perhaps.

"..... so this is how it works....."

He looked at the Nyankichi who was summoned onto his head.

Nyankichi then looked down with a slightly angry face,

"Don't call me for nothing-Ni!"

It said.

Taito then shrugged his shoulders,

"No, but, if I don't try using your powers, I won't know how useful it is right?"

Nyankichi then made an annoyed face,

"Then quickly test it out. Are you also going to try out Ska'rz-Ni?"

"Yeah."

"Then get on with it-Nya."

"Ah, it's 'Nya' again."

"Hurry uuuppp!"

"Aah, alright alright. Ok, here goes..... Sk---"

"Raise your hands before you-Ni!"

"Eh? Do I have to?"

"The curse will come out from your hands-Ni, if you leave them like that, it will hit your feet-Ni!"

"I never hear that before ~. That's why I need to learn....."

"It's already time for my afternoon nap, so get on with it-Ni!"

"..... I really would have preferred a less annoying power....."

Feeling a slight tinge of regret, he pointed his right hand in front.

"Is this ok?"

"Do it-Ni."

"Here goes....."

And he chanted the spell.

"Ska'rz"

He murmured.

Upon doing that, Nyankichi's fur stood up. The golden light in its eyes became increasingly brighter.

Then, from Taito's hand, a purplish hazy stuff flew out.

"....."

It flew out through the dimensional rift to the other side, and a bunch of fluff, and then ended.

"Erm, is there any effect to what happened just now?"

"A fearsome curse-Ni."

"..... no, I get the curse part, but shouldn't it like go wham, bam, or something like that?"

"That'll be when it hits someone-Ni."

"Uhm."

"And that's how it is, so I'll be going-Ni."

After saying that, it again descended onto the ground. And then, this time, it started walking off in a direction different from the dimensional rift's opening, and disappeared.

"Huh? Where did it go?"

But there was no answer. It seemed to have disappeared to somewhere else.

"....."

"..... seems like I have to go to another place to look for another power, otherwise it won't do....."

He said with a disappointed face.

He then took out his cellphone to ascertain the time. And opened it. Looking at the display, where the antenna mark was,

"Ah, I'm out of range."

He muttered.

Well, he didn't even know whether he was still on earth or not, so it wasn't odd to be out of range.

That's why,

"Maybe it's better for me to go back once for now."

He thought.

About two hours had passed since he left the school, and even though it should still be just before noon, there might be some progress at the school side.

Like maybe Gekkou had talked to the << **Military** >> and they were able to proceed on to the elf lands.

"Gekkou will get mad at me if he knows that I'm out of range."

Upon saying that, he issued a command to the << **Holy Ground** >>.

"Let's go back to the park earlier."

"Then, please give the order."

"Open."

At that moment, a rift opened in the wall behind him. After ascertaining it,

"So long, I'll be back."

"....."

"Well, I should know better than to expect a reply."

After saying that, he returned to the park.

The sun was up high, and it was dazzling.

Unexpectedly, there were three four to five year old kids playing in the park, and they were surprised at seeing Taito emerging from a hole which suddenly appeared.

Crap, Taito thought for a moment, but after looking at Taito vacantly for a moment, the kids went back to playing among themselves and chasing one another around the park, and Taito breathed a sigh of relief.

Furthermore, the three women who appeared to be the mothers of the kids were busy chatting and did not notice him.

If Taito felt like it, he could have easily kidnapped the children.

"..... Japan sure is peaceful."

He murmured, and once again too a look at his cellphone. He then went into the mail section to check his inbox.

There were three mails.

One from his mother.

One from his little sister.

And the last one was from Gekkou.

Taito then anxiously opened the mail from Gekkou. What if we are going to go save Haruka right now, he thought as he mashed the buttons.

Sender ---

Irritating Kurenai Gekkou.

Title ---

It's me.

Text ---

Tonight at twelve.

Assemble at my house.

I'll be holding a study session for the end-of-term tests beginning in July. Since you idiots have missed a number of lessons, I'll teach you so that you don't fail. Attendance is compulsory.

Looking at what was written in there, Taito's face became filled with doubt. Considering the fact that Gekkou is probably the type of person who doesn't care whether other students fail or not and may even happily make fun of them if they do,

"..... holding a study session?"

Don't tell me something's up?

He thought.

At the same moment,

"Besides, the end-of-terms are not really on my mind now..... is it because of that? Student council members must not fail? If that's the case, then....."

But he shook his head. He quickly dispelled the unsettled feeling which was suddenly growing in his chest,

"Well, let me put that aside for now. In any case, I won't think about it until I bring Haruka back."

He said.

For now, he would give a call to Gekkou first,

"It's me."

"Ah, Gekkou?"

"That's right."

"Erm, you just sent a mail right? Regarding that....."

But, Gekkou cut him off and said.

"As what was written in the mail. I'm holding a study session tonight. But, in preparation for that, I'll be sleeping in my house, so don't disturb me."

"Er no, that's what I'm saying. Why are you holding a study session out of the blue.....?"

"Click!"

"Damn, he cut it off!"

Taito yelled angrily as he went into his call log and pressed on Irritating Kurenai Gekkou's name.

Then,

"The number you are trying to call may be out of range....."

"Don't shit with me."

And he flipped his phone close.

As he closed his phone roughly, the kids in the park looked at him.

Even the mothers looked at him with puzzlement written on their faces, they then whispered among themselves and started making their way to the kids.

"Aah jeez."

He said. Following that, he pondered for a while quietly,

"Anyway, I'll do that. I'm not sure what's going on, but I'll go drop by Gekkou's house, I guess."

After saying that, he took off from the park.

Walking along the corridor in a strange fashion.

Black suit, and a thin red tie. A man wearing a hat like those that are born in the mafia in movies, with somewhat intelligent looking round glasses.

He looked around twenty four-five years of age and probably wasn't a student. Neither did he look like a teacher.

Rather, if a teacher dressed like someone from a previous generation, he would have become a topic in the school, so he probably was not a teacher.

Then, who is he?

"....."

Thought Aomi Izumi.

The man seemed to have noticed her and smiled. On a closer look, he's a pretty good looking man. Maybe because he is a half perhaps, he has ash-colored eyes.

The man looked intently at Izumi,

"Is that tasty?"

He asked.

On hearing that, Izumi took out the lollipop from inside her mouth. Even she wouldn't brazenly smoke within the school compound, and conseqeuntly, after her nicotine supply got cut off, in order to fill the craving of her mouth, she would chew on a lollipop.

Izumi then said,

"Are you hitting on me?"

On hearing that, the man laughed.

"Ahhaha. I'm a new teacher, I'll get caught immediately if I'm hitting on girls this quickly in the school."

Upon saying that, he brought his hands together and made a pose as if both his hands were handcuffed,

"Your attire, are you really a teacher?"

"Is it strange?"

"Erm, I'm kind of shocked that you didn't even realize that."

On hearing those words, the man said.

"Kidding. I know that it's strange. The truth is I really love those mafia movies you see, and I thought of fulfilling my dream of entering the stage with this on my first day of school."

"Heehh. I don't really get it though..... well, you've chosen the wrong profession, it seems."

The man laughed again.

"Ahhaha. Perhaps. Well, I didn't really expect to become a teacher all of a sudden as well....."

He said.

Izumi then smiled. This man might be an interesting fellow, she thought.

The reason was because the things he said were clearly strange.

In order to become a high school teacher, one must first get one's teaching qualifications in university, and then go through a teaching internship

before becoming a full fledged teacher, so, to say that he was surprised at being appointed a teacher out of the blue, it didn't make sense at all.

There were thus a number of dubious issues at hand.

Was the person before her really a teacher?

If he was, then what did he mean by saying that he was suddenly appointed a teacher?

Well, even if she pondered her doubts quietly, it was not something she could find out without getting a direct answer from him, but,

"..... well, I'm a little busy so I need to get going."

She did not ask him anything.

Even if she did ask, it was not like he would give an answer, she thought, and besides, this school was probably such a place.

Even though she couldn't comprehend it, it seemed like a strange, odd place shrouded in mystery.

The first time she realized this was when she was hiding behind the school premises, skipping her classes. She was sitting in the shade of a tree when she saw the student council president, Kurenai Gekkou, running from the direction of the schoolyard.

He had an unusual anxious face, and appeared to be chasing after something.

She had looked up at him and wondered about what he was doing.

Then, Kurenai appeared to have noticed her. Looking at her, *don't you dare look at me*, he had said unreasonably.

And then, after that.

"....."

Several minutes of her memories after that disappeared.

Before she knew it, Kurenai was standing over her and told her that she had lost consciousness suddenly.

She then looked up vacantly at Kurenai. As if he had prepared it beforehand, he then said to her in a monotonous tone.

You are probably anemic. You probably hit your head when you fell down, so go to the infirmary. And it's in the middle of lessons right now. You're not playing truant.

After saying that, he left.

Even though initially, he had that desperate looking face, but when he was leaving, his face was calm as if nothing had happened before.

Ever since then, Izumi had been watching him. And it was clear to her that various odd things had been happening around him.

Upon questioning the students who had been around Kurenai, it appeared to her that pockets of time had vanished from among them.

With regards to the strange talk of disappearing time, for example, even though a student was having a conversation during noon break, all of a sudden, his memory from then till the end of school had disappeared, and this had happened to quite a number of people.

It seems like Kurenai and the rest of the student council members have been tweaking our memories.....

Even though I don't how they are doing it, but somehow, it seems, the are able to do such a thing.

Then, there was this recent incident.

A passing demonic force infiltrated into the school.

No, most of the students were told that there was a surprise evacuation drill and that they were allowed to go home early, but, she had hidden herself in school.

Something must be up, she had thought.

Even if it was a surprise evacuation drill, it was too suspicious.

She had hidden herself in the place where the cleaning tools were kept, and had waited until all the students were gone. After hiding for a while, she then started exploring the school.

However, she had bad luck and was discovered by a teacher, *what are you doing!*, he had yelled at her and she attempted to escape.

Then the teacher had said.

"Fool. This is no evacuation drill! There's a passing demonic force in the school right now!"

That was what the teacher had said. And then, she was brought out of the school by the teacher.

However, if there was a large incident such as a passing demonic force, it shouldn't have been just covered up by using an evacuation drill as an excuse, the police would definitely show up and with that thought she stayed outside the school to spy on it..

> **Passing Demonic Force:** Never explained this previously, but here it is referred to as 通り魔 (Toori-Ma), which can also be translated to 'passing demon' or 'passing evil'. A Toori-Ma literally refers to a 'passing devil/evil that creates serious harm to people, usually resulting in people's deaths'. It is also used to describe someone who does a Toori-Ma act, and can refer to a lunatic killer, or a killer with some sort of deranged or mental problems, or even under the influence of drugs that cause hallucinations, and this killer goes on a rampage and kills people indiscriminately. Such incidents are referred to as a 'Toori-Ma Killing Incident'. and there are several famous ones in Japan. As this is a fantasy setting, I did not initially translate it as such and also since I wasn't too familiar with the use of the term. But from here, it seems like it refers to the later human act rather than the former fantastic phenomenon.

But, there was no sign of them.

On top of that, afterwards, when she went to school and asked the teacher who had brought her out, *what are you talking about?*, he had said to her. And that wasn't a lie, the teacher had a real bewildered face.

With that, she was increasingly certain of it.

This school was moved by something, something was erasing the memories of teachers and students.

And, by a stroke of luck, the people controlling things happened to overlook her. They thought that they only needed to remove the memories of the teachers who knew about the passing demonic force, and not the students who knew nothing of it.

"....."

Thus, Izumi retained her memories.

Strange things were occurring frequently in this school, and someone did not want these things to be leaked out to the public.

Just by erasing the memories of the students and teachers, things wouldn't turn into an out-of-hand situation.

Furthermore, it seems like everything revolves around the student council.

Everything was too suspicious, she thought,

"....."

She almost laughed out. The class she was in had a bunch of hardworking kids who were good in studies, and it was really boring everyday for her.

Jeez, even though they were freshmen, *which university are you going? how many mock tests do you have in your cram school?, I didn't really study yesterday you know ~*, things like that, isn't it stupid?

She thought.

There were so many more things to life.

They would only be fifteen, sixteen years old once in their lives.

Thus, she should just pass the days with more interesting and funny stuff, filling their days with laughter, rather than worrying about her future.

And then she found it.

Her own life.

She found an incredible secret in her high school life, much more interesting than any other's high school ife.

That's why,

"....."

Fufu, she almost laughed out.

Looking at the man before her intently.

Looking intently at the dubious man, who was probably as dangerous as the 'passing demonic force' (crazy killer) previously, a sliver of thrill ran through her body.

If she made a mistake, she might lose her life. Even though this was supposed to be a normal high school, but the truth was if she said the wrong word by mistake, it could lead her to her death.

Is there anything more thrilling than this?

"....."

Thinking about that, a smile was about to break out on her face. However, she resisted that smile, and made an ignorant, innocent face,

"See you then ~, new person."

Upon saying that, she wanted to pass him from the side.

But at that moment, the man said.

"Ah, by the way."

"....."

Ohh, crap? she thought on hearing that. Maybe it's better if I make a break for it?, she thought.

The truth is, I'm not a teacher but a killer, would he say that?, she thought.

The man continued.

"Right now, it should be the middle of the fifth period, so why are you idling about in the corridor?"

Izumi replied.

"'Cos I'm a delinquent."

"Ahhaha, you are not in class because you're a delinquent?"

"Yup yup."

"But it's not good to play truant."

"And also, I have a stomachache ~. A girl's day you know."

"Really?"

"Yup."

"But this corridor isn't the way to the infirmary, isn't it?"

Izumi then smiled.

"..... I can't smoke in the infirmary, you see."

"Uwah, you're really a delinquent ~"

"That's right ---. As a new person, you might not know of this, but with regards to the delinquent group I'm in, even the principal can't get close to us."

It was a lie. Ever since coming to this school, she had yet to make any real friends.

However, as if he believed what she said, this supposedly new teacher said,

"I've seen such a drama before. A school with a group of delinquent which nobody can touch. Well then, I'll be the hot-blooded teacher in such a crazy school."

"If you are able to, that is. But if you want to get wild with that hot blood, can you do it tomorrow? Even the delinquents need some mental preparation."

The man then appeared to agree,

"Well, there's that too."

"Ahha, Sensei, I'd never have thought that you are so understanding ~"

She flattered him.

However, he just smiled kindly,

"But, since it's a bother, I'll get wild maybe next year. This year, I shall take it easy and get used to the school."

"Then, what about cigarettes?"

"I also smoke."

"Ahhaha."

"Hahaha."

"Well, I'm leaving then."

"Go ahead. Next time, let me in on where I can smoke without getting caught by anyone."

On hearing those words, she stuck out her tongue.

"That's my secret."

Then once again, she turned her back towards the man. And walked off. But, even so, she was aware that her whole body remained tense for quite some time.

Perhaps, he knew it as well. But still, it was fine. There was probably no student who could confess their smoking habit to a teacher without feeling nervous. That was why she let him feel it. She let him feel her weird nervousness, so that he would not have his guard up.

With that, she walked. Appearing nonchalant, she walked. After walking for a while, she turned around.

There was no one left in the corridor.

After ascertaining that,

"..... aah."

She sighed out softly.

"Aah, that was interesting."

She said with a smiling face.

Following that, tired from the tension in her body, she took out the lollipop from her mouth, wrapped it in paper, and placed it in her pocket. In that same pocket, where another hidden pocket was, and from that hidden pocket, she took out a cigarette stick, and lit it.

And while openly smoking, she walked along the corridor of the school.

If she was found out, she would probably be suspended. But, compared to the thrill which she had just experienced, that was nothing.

Puffing away on her cigarette, she walked.

The place was the center of the fifth floor of the school premises.

The place which she was heading to was,

"..... oh my, I'm in luck. There's no one."

Where she was heading to was the student council room of Miyasaka High.

Chapter 4 - The Student Council Troupe That Does A Moonlight Flit

By the time he reached the stuck-up student council president's house, most of the afternoon was gone.

Firstly, it takes time to get to Gekkou's house, which was south of a certain park that was north of the school, secondly, since he was dragged into the world of Elves this morning without any breakfast, he dropped by a convenience store along the way to buy a bento, and by the time he finished eating, it had taken more time than he had thought.

Anyway, after some sidetracks for a while, Taito finally reached Gekkou's house and he pressed the intercom.

And from the other side of the intercom,

"Who is it?"

The usual unfriendly voice sounded.

"It's me."

Replied Taito.

Gekkou then said.

"I'm expecting you."

Taito became a little surprised,

"Oh, really?"

"Yeah."

"Then, I didn't make a mistake in coming here?"

"Unexpectedly yes."

"Hm. That's good then. I never thought that you would hold a study session for us though ~. So, what's up?"

But, no answer came, and the intercom was cut off. Taito shrugged his shoulders. At any rate, it seemed like someone was coming to open the door.

And he waited quietly for a while.

"....."

Gekkou's house, compared to the owner in question, who is the student council president of Miyasaka High School which is overflowing with monsters, and who excels in both sports and studies, as well popular with the girls, his house is a normal, ordinary detached house.

The yard was small, and the building appeared to be old as well. An ordinary two-storey house.

But the only inhabitants of this house is only Gekkou, and the demon Mirai who doesn't have a residence in the human world.

It seemed like both his parents were killed when he was at a young age. The one who killed them was his twin brother. That Hinata who had employed monsters and had come attacking Himea, was the little brother of Gekkou, it seemed.

Well, let's put that aside for now.

Anyway.

"....."

At that moment, the door to the house opened.

It was Mirai who came out.

Having her demon powers sealed by Gekkou, Mirai, who appeared nothing more than a middle school girl with her childish face, opened the door,

"Oh, it's Mr Immortal. Welcome ~! Come on in."

She said.

Taito then nodded,

"Sorry for intruding."

He entered the house. He took off his shoes at the entrance hall and pondered stupidly about whether to arrange his shoes or not, when from beside him, Mirai slipped out of her shoes leaving them scattered, and skipped back into the house,

"....."

For now, he lined up his shoes neatly together with Mirai's shoes. As he was doing that, he smiled wryly at himself for having such considerate manners.

Then, once again,

"Alright, sorry for intruding ~"

He said as he entered.

When he was here previously, he got the impression that the house was pretty gloomy on the whole, but right now, the atmosphere seemed different.

Perhaps, it was due to the corridor lights being switched on compared to the last time, he felt that the house was brighter.

Or could it be because Mirai is her? Taito thought.

If so, then, to the Gekkou who always has a scowling face, and seemingly doesn't like to be friendly with others since before he was born, Mirai's presence is a pretty important one, he thought.

If not so, just by hearing about his profile, it's easy to imagine him as a gloomy person.

It also seemed like his parents were killed in this very house.

"....."

Upon thinking about that, he looked around the corridor. It was indeed difficult to think of it as gloomy. The reason was because, at the other end,

"Mr Immortal has come!"

Mirai said cheerfully, and then,

"You're too loud."

Gekkou groaned with a hint of annoyance.

Taito smiled at that, and proceeded along the corridor. And reached the dining kitchen.

There were four chairs at the dining table, which indicated that previously, this used to be a family of four.

Sitting on two of them, were Gekkou and Mirai.

Mimicking Mirai's tone in announcing his arrival, Taito then said,

"I've come."

Of course, no one bothered making a jab at him.

He then looked at Gekkou and saw his left eye covered with bandages around his head.

Taito then said.

"What happened?"

Gekkou then replied.

"A sty."

"There you go again. The blue black has spread beyond the bandages. Did you get into a fight and lose?"

On hearing those words,

"Gekkou will never lose to anyone!"

Mirai said and Taito looked in her direction,

"..... well, he certainly won't lose in terms of bad personality."

After saying that, he gave up on further poking fun at him. At any rate, this fellow wouldn't talk about anything that he didn't want to talk about.

So he pointed at a chair and said,

"Can I sit?"

Gekkou then replied.

"Yeah. Drinks are inside the fridge."

"Can I grab one for myself?"

While asking, without waiting for a reply, Taito opened the fridge. Inside the fridge, were only bottles and cans of mineral water, oolong tea, cola, and Dr Pepper.

"This is life huh."

Taito smiled.

He took out a can of oolong tea.

"What about you guys?"

He asked. But Gekkou shook his head.

Mirai raised up both her hands,

"Dr Pepper for me....."

But at that moment,

"You promised me you'll only have three bottles a day."

Said Gekkou.

But Mirai answered,

"Uwu... t-this is the third you know?"

"Don't lie."

"R-Really."

"Hehh. Then, have one. If you can't keep to your word....."

Just as Gekkou was finishing his sentence, Mirai said.

"G-Get me an oolong tea then....."

"Alright."

"Am I a good kid?"

"Shut up, small fry."

"Praise me ~"

Mirai tugged at Gekkou's clothes, but seemingly used to it, he ignored her completely.

As Taito smiled wryly at the scene before him, he took out two bottles of oolong tea, and handed one to Mirai. Following that, he sat in one of the chairs. And took a drink of the oolong tea,

"So?"

He asked.

"What in the world happened?"

The question should also encompass asking about what had happened to Gekkou's face.

Something should have happened.

That was why Gekkou had sent Taito that message, seemingly worried about his end-of-term tests, but yet seemingly unconcerned.

For Taito to have come here with the question of *what was all that about?*, it went according to Gekkou's plan.

In other words, Gekkou had called Taito here in a roundabout manner.

However,

"If you want me to come to your house, why didn't you just say so?"

On hearing Taito's question, Gekkou took out a cellphone from his pocket and placed it on the table.

"This cellphone has been tapped, both for mails, as well as calls."

"Tapped?"

"Yeah."

"By who?"

"The << **Military** >>."

On hearing those words, Taito looked at Gekkou's face, which appeared to be beaten blue-black by someone.

"Could it be that, that was due to failed talks with the << **Military** >>?"

"They are useless after all. It seems like they don't understand Japanese."

"So you got beaten."

"Didn't I tell you that it was a sty?"

"..... well, it's ok if you don't want to talk about it though..... so what is the conclusion? Not saving Haruka?"

"We'll save her."

"But the talks with the << **Military** >>....."

But a smile surfaced on Gekkou.

"The student council president is me. I won't let others tell me what to do."

"Hey, but aren't you the pet of the << **Military** >>?"

"Is that so?"

"Yeah."

"I don't remember that."

"Really?"

"Yeah, that's right."

Gekkou nodded. He further went on to take out a new cellphone from his pocket, and placed it on the table.

Taito took it.

"What's this?"

He asked and Gekkou replied.

"It's a cellphone whose radio waves are coated with the seventh function of true demon."

",,,,,, erm, Japanese please."

"You mean idiotese right? In other words, to avoid getting tapped by the << **Military** >>. From now on, if you want to talk about something the << **Military** >> should not know about, use this instead. Take it."

On hearing those words, Taito looked at the cellphone. However, it was a normal-looking outdated model of a cellphone.

And then,

"Who's paying for this?"

But Gekkou did not answer. It's probably something not worth talking about. Taito nodded, and put that cellphone into his pocket. As expected, it was a little hard to move with two cellphones in his pocket.

And, after putting away that cellphone which was free from the << **Military's** >> tapping, Taito said.

"About carrying a cellphone that is untapped by the << **Military** >>, does that mean we're going to save Haruka without the << **Military** >> knowing?"

Gekkou nodded.

"That's right."

"Doesn't that sound super terrible?"

Said Taito.

Gekkou merely answered with a shrug.

However, in truth, it shouldn't really be such a terrible, noisy affair. Even though Taito didn't know much about the << **Military** >>, an organization that was manipulating Miyasaka High from behind the scenes, Taito knew

at least that it should be an organization that held a tremendous amount of power.

In any case, the police in this town appeared to listen to the << **Military** >>.

The media as well. Even when such a crazy thing had happened with Miyasaka High at the center of things, the matter appeared to have been quieted down. Perhaps, even the goverement was involved with the organization.

Anyway, it was certainly an organization that holds a tremendous amount of power.

But Gekkou,

"We're probably risking our lives here. Even if we managed to successfully rescue Shigure Haruka against the orders of the << **Military** >>..... we may not be able to return to this school anymore."

Said such an unthinkable thing easily.

Taito then said.

"So, are you asking me? Whether we are going to do it? Or give up on it?"

But Gekkou smiled.

"Why would I ask that? At any rate, you'll do it right?"

"Er, yeah but."

"In fact, it should be me who should be asked this question. Is there a reason for me to risk my life for your mistress?"

"She's not my mistress....."

But Gekkou ignored his words and continued.

"Now, beg me on your knees. Tell me you're sorry for always causing me trouble."

"..... hey, you..... ah ~, but, you're right. Yeah. I'm sorry for causing trou....."

"And so, that's it."

"Hey! You asked me to apologize, but you're not listening to me."

On hearing those words, Gekkou laughed through his nose.

"It's not like I'm doing it for your sake. I just want to let the << **Military** >> know what will happen if they underestimate me."

"You totally switched the subject, didn't you?"

"Is that so?"

"Yeah."

Gekkou laughed again. And, following that,

"....."

Without saying anything, he stood up. And was about to walk out of the dining kitchen,

"Huh? Where're you going? Toilet?"

To Taito's question, Gekkou turned around, and said with an annoyed face.

"I'm tired, so I'm going to sleep."

"Aah? How did this turn of events happen all of a sudden....."

But Gekkou continued.

"You get some rest as well. We shall set off for the other world at nine in the night. After that, it might be a while before we can get any sleep."

On hearing those words,

"Aah."

Said Taito.

"The message about us gathering here at twelve midnight to have a study session, is to deceive the << **Military** >>....."

"That's right. Well, I'm not sure how effective that will be though..... Anyway, between nine to twelve, we will disappear under the << **Military's** >> nose. They will probably send pursuers after us. However, if we use the << **Way** >> to make our move, they won't be able to catch hold of our tracks."

"To the extent of not coming back to the school?"

"That's right. In other words, until we have accomplished the task of saving Shigure Haruka without stirring any trouble with the Elves, we'll not return to our world."

He said.

"So sleep now. Once we get to the other side, we won't have any time to rest."

Once again, Gekkou turned away. And walked out of the dining kitchen, and started up the stairs to the second storey, where his room was.

And to his back, Taito shouted,

"Where shall I sleep?"

"Use any room you like. And also, contact Saitohimea. I've already handed that witch an untaped phone."

"What should I tell her?"

"We'll be moving out at nine tonight. Until then, don't leave the school. However, after that, the << **Military** >> will probably stop protecting her. Since we are turning traitorous. So come along with us..... tell her that."

Gekkou said what he wanted to say, and went up to the second storey.

Taito then,

"....."

Looked at Gekkou's disappearing figure for a while, and following that, turned towards Mirai who was drinking her oolong tea,

"Hey, you know."

He began.

Uhn, *uhn*, Mirai nodded.

"Oolong tea is really not enough yeah."

"No, I'm not talking about that though. We are betraying the << **Military** >>."

"What is the << **Military** >>?"

"Ah ha ha ~"

He laughed.

To Mirai, who calls herself the Great Demon of Lightning, who the << **Military** >> are and what they do is of no concern to her.

That was also probably true for the << Most Ancient Sorcerer >> Vampire Saitohimea.

It was not like the two of them wanted the << **Military** >> to protect them.

Mirai is the contracted demon of Gekkou.

As for Himea.

"....."

She was in love with Taito, so wanted to be by his side.

Upon thinking of that, he realized there was really nothing much to fear in betraying the << **Military** >>.

If they go against the << **Military** >>, there's a possibility that he would no longer be able to go back to his normal daily life again; while that sounded terrifying, but, his daily routine life was already no longer ordinary.

So as to speak, he had been knocked down by a truck, burnt by fire, but yet, he couldn't die.

That's why,

"At any rate, I'll still be going ahead with it, so there's no reason to worry about it."

He said.

Mirai then gulped down her oolong tea.

"Now, I shall also go brush my teeth and read my manga."

She said cheerfully. And she skipped out of the kitchen.

With that, Taito, who had been left alone in someone else's house, felt a slight unease in his heart, and proceeded to take out the cellphone which

Gekkou had given him from his pocket. He opened the address book. All the student council members' names had been inputted.

Your Master.

Idiot Demon.

Idiot Witch.

Idiot.

"Other Gekkou, everyone else starts with 'I' duh!"

After throwing a comeback punchline, he went on to alter the entries in the address book.

Irritating Kurenai Gekkou.

Dr Pepper kid.

Saito Himea.

Following that, he pointed the cursor to Saitohimea's entry, and initiated a call. After a few rings,

"Erm, may I know who is this person with the name 'Idiot'?"

Himea's voice sounded.

"It's me."

Replied Taito.

"Taito."

Himea called out happily.

"This is awesome! I can talk to Taito!"

"Yeah. I also just got mine from Gekkou. So there's something I need to tell you....."

"More importantly more importantly, where are you now, Taito? Aren't you in school?"

"Nope."

"I'm feeling lonely, so come over here ~. I'm really bored ~"

Said Himea, and Taito answered,

"No, erm, before that, listen to me. There a number of things."

"A number of things?"

"Yeah. A number of things. Erm, where should I start?"

"Uhn."

"Erm, it seems like Gekkou is having a disagreement with the << **Military** >>."

"Uhn."

"It seems like we are going to ignore the orders of the << **Military** >> and head to the Elves' world."

"Uhn."

"So, since we're betraying the << **Military** >>, they will probably undo the barrier used to protect you from getting discovered by the other organizations."

"Uhn."

"And I think we are getting involved in something really dangerous. There's a possibility that we won't be able to return after going to the Elves' world."

On hearing that,

"But..... Taito, you'll be by my side right?"

Himea asked in a slightly worried voice.

Taito nodded. Even though Himea could not see him nodding, he nodded anyway.

"That's my intention."

Upon saying that,

"Then it's fine!"

She said in a completely carefree voice.

Even though the truth was there were a ton of problems waiting for them, but she said it in a completely unworried voice, which made Taito smile.

"Yeah ~"

"Uh-huh!"

"Well, that's how it is, we'll be picking you up at nine tonight. Then, we'll head to the Elf country."

"Sounds like we're going on a trip ~. If only Gekkou and the rest aren't around."

"Perhaps."

"Then I'll prepare for the trip ~"

"Erm, yeah. Do that. I also need to make my own preparations. Well....."

Himea then said.

"Well, see you at nine tonight then!"

"Alright. Ah, about the << **Military** >>....."

"Keep it secret from them right? That sounds good to me. It's going to be a secret trip?"

Fufufu, she laughed out as she said that. He remembered hearing from her before, that whenever she was free, she would go read the books in the school library, to acquire knowledge of this world.

Taito smiled,

"Well, see you tonight then."

"See you tonight."

And he hung up.

He then looked at the clock on the wall.

It was already past two in the afternoon.

Maybe he should go home once and pack some stuff for the trip, he thought. But, if he were to go home now and prepare for the trip, then come back with a bag, the << **Military** >> might get suspicious, he thought,

"....."

Once again, he took out the untapped cellphone, and dialed 'Irritating Kurenai Gekkou'.

And Gekkou picked up.

"I'll kill you."

"Ah ~, sorry for interrupting your sleep."

"Seriously."

"Erm, there's something I want to ask you."

"What is it?"

"Is there a chance we won't be coming back anytime soon? If so, maybe I need to make some preparations or something....."

But Gekkou said to that,

"Fool. On the other side, there will be appropriate clothes and daily necessities. We're going to fit into it."

"Ah, I see."

"But."

"Yeah?"

"If you want to see your family for the last time, then go. I'll pick you up at nine via a << ***Way*** >>*."*

"....."

On hearing those words of Gekkou.

If you want to see your family for the last time --- after hearing those words, for the first time, he felt truly apprehensive about this incident.

That's right.

There was a chance that he might never get to see his family again.

His Mom. His Dad. His little sister. Even his classmates as well. He had lied to the fellows in his class that he would definitely come back.

Taito then said,

"..... yeah. I guess I'll go back once."

"I see."

"Yeah."

"But don't say goodbye or....."

"Don't worry. I won't do that. The << **Military** >> will catch on to it right?"

"That's right."

"Alright then. Sorry for waking you up. I'll head back and catch some sleep as well, so that I'll be ready to go at nine."

"Aah. Then see you tonight."

"See you tonight."

And he hung up.

Taito stared at his cellphone for a while, then, after drinking up his oolong tea, he stood up.

He left Gekkou's house and headed home.

His house was not that far. Even though he didn't know the name of Kurenai Gekkou until he entered high school, his own house was but five minutes' walk away from school.

After walking along the familiar scenery of the residential district, he passed by Haruka's house and reached home.

But no one was in.

His Dad was at work and doesn't normally come back so early. His little sister was in school at this time as well; she is different from him, has a

good mind, attends cram school on Wednesdays, and would be coming back rather late today.

On top of that, his Mom was out shopping.

"....."

Without a word, he walked up to the photo frame that was placed on top of the TV in the hall.

The smiling faces of his whole family were in that photograph inside the photo frame.

It was a picture taken when Taito was in middle school and his little sister was in grade five. He took out the photo from the frame, folded it, and put it inside his wallet. He then went back to his room, using a piece of report paper, he worte *"I won't be around for a while, since I'll be on an assignment for the student council, so there's no need to worry"* on that piece of paper, then placed it inside the drawer of his desk.

Following that, he placed his two cellphone and wallet on top of his desk.

He then thought about maybe changing into more comfortable light clothing rather than wearing his school uniform, but,

"....."

He lay on his side on the bed.

The reason was because if he took that off, it would seem like he wouldn't be able to return to this real world anymore.

As much as possible, he wanted to go to the other world as an executive member of the student council of Miyasaka High.

And come back safely.

He felt that in order to do that, he had to wear this uniform.

He continued looking at the ceiling for a while. The ceiling layered with white wallpaper which he used to stare at as a kid. After gazing it for a while, gradually his eyes started closing. So as to speak, he had gone to school this morning without much sleep. Maybe it was because he had used up too much energy, he was really tired now. His eyes shut close. Immediately, he sank into the world of dreams.

He sank deeply, deeply into his dream to the extent that he knew not what he was dreaming.

But he could feel that it's a happy dream.

Everyone was smiling.

A peaceful dream with neither kidnappings nor other incidents.

It's best to be ordinary, someone said. She had said it with a happy looking face, *that may be so,* Taito thought.

After seeing that fun dream for a while, and feeling blessed from that, Taito's eyes opened.

Before he knew it, the sun had set and the room had been plunged into darkness.

The time was a little before nine.

Then, a hole appeared in the wall.

On the other side, was the student council room with Gekkou looking down at him, who said.

"Let's go."

Taito got up.

He could hear the sounds from the TV in the hall downstairs. Mom is probably back from her shopping. He then smiled sadly,

"Aah."

He said.

"Let's go."

He then took a traveling bag from his bedside. Gekkou looked at that,

"Leave that."

"Do I really have to do that?"

"Yeah. It's a hindrance."

"Ok, I'll do that then."

Upon saying that, he took the two cellphones, and his wallet with his family photo in it, from the desk and put them into his pocket.

Then, he turned around once again. He turned to look at the dark room.

He looked intently at the room which he might never come back to.

Following that,

"Ok. Let's go."

Taito said and passed through the dimensional rift on the wall.

Chapter 5 - Disguising the Inside of Darkness

Their jobs began some years ago.

One by one, the jobs started from small ones, and in time, gradually grew to larger ones.

They knew that it was a very difficult thing to do to acquire power in this **World** without any backing, but even if not for that, they would still be the subject of discrimination.

Just looking upon their existence would make many grimace.

Unforgivable ones.

Ones who could not be forgiven.

That's what they were called.

That's why they truly, carefully, one by one, accumulated them.

With the righteous method, walking forward on the right path.

Even with these hard work, the discrimination did not disappear, even though unpleasant feelings were still held against them, but bit by bit, they started succeeding.

News of their work spread, and their names got accepted in this **World**.

Once they got a request, they would get it done.

If it was a request they couldn't fulfill, they would be frank about it and decline it.

Trust in this line of work was absolute.

A failure was a failure even if they had worked hard on the job.

That was why when they first got the request of this human girl, they were truly uncertain about it.

"....."

Hasga Entolio looked intently at the girl laying on the ground in the darkness, a girl by the name of Shigure Haruka, and his eyes narrowed.

Dark blue hair, golden piercing eyes like those of a wolf. A well featured face, and a well built body.

He was probably around the age of seventeen, eighteen.

One look at him would reveal that he's an elf. Of course. Elf blood flowed inside of him. However, inside him, was not just the blood of elves.

He was a half-breed.

He had no idea what race his father belonged to. Was it a lowly human? Or a dirty demon?

Whichever the case, his mother was called a slut.

A fearsome slut who betrayed her kin.

At the time when Hasga was aware of things, he was not needed by the group. And the big brother who was no different from him, used to desperately rummaged through the trash to bring him up.

His big brother was six, and he was then four.

Their mother was no longer around. Having committed a taboo, she had been imprisoned somewhere far away. He couldn't say that he wanted to see his mother after all this while, but anyway,

"..... perhaps, we shouldn't have taken up the job after all?"

Said Hasga.

He then looked at his big brother who was standing beside him.

Serge Entolio.

With completely opposite hair and eyes as him; soft golden hair, gentle looking deep blue eyes. Serge looked at him and smiled.

"You might be right huh~? I'm really weak against girls though ~"

On hearing those words, Hasga also smiled.

"What Aniki is weak against are pitiful fellows."

"Well I wonder ~. I don't think so though."

"But that's the case."

"Really?"

"Yeah. Otherwise, you would have abandoned me and lived alone right? Aniki, you have golden hair and look like a pure breed, so you could have abandoned me and lived among them."

"Oh. There's actually such a way huh."

"Even though you've known about it all along."

"But, well, if I abandon my cute little brother, I'll regret it for the rest of my life....."

At that moment, Serge's eyes fell on the sleeping Shigure Haruka.

Looking at that face, Hasga continued.

"So, if you abandon this girl, you'll regret it?"

"Well, there's that too, but this girl has her uses right?"

"No, isn't that an afterthought? Even though the truth is you really want to save her."

"Can't I do that?"

"You're too naive. If you keep on doing things like this, we won't have enough lives for it."

Serge then looked at him,

"Well, when such a time comes, the smart Hasga can protect me."

"There's a limit to it."

"Please ~"

While saying that, Serge stretched out his hand. He stretched out his hand towards Shigure Haruka. Then he murmured something softly.

A small horn then emerged from his golden hair.

Normally, there should be two horns, but he had only one, which indicated that they were indeed different from pure blooded elves.

On top of that, an elf's horns are white in color.

But theirs are a distorted black. It was a deep color of darkness, which caused the elves to call them the ill-omened children of demons and caused them to come after their lives.

A light appeared at the tip of that horn. The light then moved to Serge's open hand.

That was the power to seal anything.

It was definitely an abnormal power of other origins, that were different from the power of the spirits used by the elves.

With this power of Serge which can be used to seal anything, and the power of Hasga, which can destroy anything, they took on jobs.

Spell Breakers.

That's their profession.

In other words, it's about sealing magic and undoing magic.

And another request had come.

A request from a human.

She had said this.

"Please seal up the memories inside me."

It wasn't a particularly rare request. An unwanted past. A past that was best to be forgotten. A past which she didn't want to remember, a hindrance that she wanted sealed.

It should be a request of a simple nature.

However, there was more to such a simple request. It was necessary to be cautious.

The painful experiences of underestimating a simple request had been plenty since coming into this **World**.

And the request this time round, was terribly troublesome.

After examining the inside of her head, he had found that her memories were not created by herself. Layers of powerful barriers were stacked on top of the memory --- *you were born for the purpose of observing the Sacrifice of the* **<< Most Ancient Sorcerer >>** *Vampire*, *Kurogane Taito* --- which would return to her upon fulfilling several conditions.

As to what conditions they were, they couldn't tell right away, but according to her, even she did not know the identity of the powerful being who had given birth to her and been manipulating her.

But she no longer wanted that.

She no longer wanted to betray the young man, Kurogane Taito, whom she had fallen in love with.

That's why she wanted those memories to be erased.

So that she could stand before him with her pure feelings without any ulterior motives.

But that might anger her master who might end up killing her off.

No, in the first place, since she was born to observe Kurogane Taito, if those memories were lost, she might even cease to exist, but she was fine with that.

If she could stand before the one she loves with her pure feelings even once, that would be enough to make her feel blessed.

"....."

That was really a foolish wish, Hasga had thought when he first heard of it.

He hated those who were willing to discard their lives. This world was overflowing with people who were screaming they didn't want to die while they were dying.

To choose death for someone unrelated, sounded like a foolish thing to do, he thought.

To say that she wanted to stand before him with her pure feelings huh.

To not abandon his little brother numerous times even while risking death, risking getting killed huh.

The world really had too many good-hearted people,

"I'm a little worried though....."

Hasga said as he smiled wryly.

However, appearing unconcerned about his worry, Serge approached the sleeping Shigure Haruka.

He had already reached the final stage of the seal. No, even with the immense sealing powers of Serge, it had taken him two weeks to seal her.

That showed how great the power which was restraining her memories was.

However, all that would soon end.

He would sever Shigure Haruka's memories and the bonds between her and her master. When that happens, he still did not know what would happen inside of her, but in any case, they would have granted one of her wish.

The compensation was information.

Information on the type of magic which should have been kept hidden, kept secret all this while. Information on the magic used by Vampire << Most Ancient Sorcerer >>.

If they were to sell this information, there was no doubt that they would not need to worry about money for the rest of their lives.

That was how valuable the information was.

However, she appeared to have no idea of its value. With an uncertain face,

"This may not be enough perhaps?"

She had said.

But, even so, Hasga wanted to refuse. He knew that when the reward for a job was too great, the danger was also great.

No, he was truly uneasy about this job.

There was the possibility of the requester dying even if the job was completed successfully.

On top of that, if they got their compensation, there was also the possibility that they would get pursued by other organizations, a dangerous piece of information.

And above all, who on earth was the one who was pulling the strings of the holder of such information, Shigure Haruka? It would be bad if they didn't know his identity. If Shigure Haruka's memories were sealed, and that fellow got mad, he might not just come after her, but seek to kill them as well.

In this **World**, if one values his life, there are many things that can't be touched.

One of them is the past ruler of the world that has been called god.

The same goes for

.

Those are not things that the living should touch.

Then, they should have refused this job.

But yet, the idiot Serge accepted it. Of course, Hasga resisted vehemently. There is no reason to take on such a request, he had said. We still have money right, he had said. We've already obtained power with which we will never get threatened by anyone, nor mocked by anyone, he had said.

But Serge did not listen to him. He just wanted to save her, he had said.

Furthermore, on more careful consideration.

Indeed, this request was too dangerous if the only reason for doing it was to save her, but taking that risk might reap an equivalent benefit, Serge had said.

There's no way that will happen, Hasga had said angrily but, Serge's way of thinking, truly, in an idiotic sense, was meaningful.

That was why he was processing Shigure Haruka's request right now.

Accepting the danger straight on.

But,

"..... it's futile isn't it."

Hasga said to himself in a groaning tone.

However, Serge was already progressing along the seal.

Just until yesterday, the personality that had the memories and the personality that didn't have the memories had been swapping around, but since this morning, both of them did not awaken.

Just a little bit more.

Just a little bit more, the seal would be completed.

And now came the difficult part.

Now came the difficult part where if they made a mistake, they would die.

He then turned around.

And looked at outside of the underground room which had a barrier erected over it.

Some elves were trying to break down the door to that room. But Hasga said while smiling.

"Fools. That door has been sealed by Aniki. Do you think you guys can break it?"

His own destructive power of destruction should be the only thing that could undo that seal.

At that moment, he looked at his open hand. He looked at his open hand which had been made for the sole purpose of destroying.

If he were to leave that hand alone, even his own body would end up getting destroyed. If not for his big brother who stayed by his side to regularly seal his powers, the tremendous destructive power that resided in his body would have obliterated his own self.

Without his big brother, he could not survive, he was a half-assed creature that could not survive on his own.

That was him.

He had thought of asking his mother why was a thing like him born; that was how much of a defective half-breed he was.

But that answer would definitely come soon.

With this job.

No, with their lives on the line, the answer would appear.

So.

"..... aniki."

Said Hasga.

Serge replied.

"What's up?"

Hasga then looked behind at his big brother,

"Nothing."

He said with a faint smile.

♦

♦

♦

Even a level seven spirit master was unable to open that door.

A powerful seal was placed on that door, and if it was casually touched, there would be casualties, the spirit masters had said.

His face frowned,

"What about specialized Curse Breakers?"

On hearing that question, the spirit masters shook their heads unanimously.

"The only Curse Breakers we know who can undo this level of seal are the Entolio brothers."

"Those abominable half-breeds?"

"Yes."

"But we're in a race against time now. It doesn't matter they are half-breeds or not. Call the Entolio brothers."

"It seems like they have gone to another world on a job and can't be contacted at all."

"Then....."

As he started, his face, the face of Slaydor, the king of Folheim Kingdom, contorted.

"Then, what shall we do?"

With long hair found only in Elves, that extended to his knees, and a beautiful neat beard.

Though he was clad in robes with a ferin that symbolizes nobility woven into robes, in contrast, he looked pathetic for a man of his high stature.

He was in his throne room.

Only certain class of Elves were allowed into this room.

Only the members of the royal family or the highest ranking among the spirit users, the level seven high element.

That was why, currently, the situation occurring here could be said to be a strange one.

Right now, in this throne room which most of the Elves were barred from entering,

"....."

Was a filthy human.

Slaydor looked at that human.

Black suit, red tie. Wearing a hat and round glasses. To the Elf Slaydor, the appearance of this white gloved person was a rare sight, but, *perhaps the humans like this kind of dressing?*, he thought.

He was probably male too, he thought.

His name was Kurosu.

Kurosu Philier Yuuichi.

A surprisingly long name. Perhaps humans placed more meaning in their names than the Elves?

Anyway, this man known as Kurosu, had come to this city saying that he was an ambassador of the << **Military** >>.

"I have intelligence saying that one of our people is currently imprisoned in this city, what in the world is this about? Depending how things go, things may escalate into a big problem..... well, in any case, let me have an audience with the king, would you?"

He knew that a messenger like him was coming. Then news about a human apparently being imprisoned in this city had come earlier this morning, from the lord of the lake of Kogan, Bestlo.

Though he was doubtful about the part that a Vampire Demon God had come looking for that human.

Initially, he thought that it was a joke. Rightfully, Bestlo should still be in his hibernation which started a hundred years ago, for the purpose of appeasing the spirits living in the Kogan.

To say that he had awakened after all this while, and on top of that, a human had been taken to the Elf world. To top if off, a Vampire
<< Most Ancient Sorcerer >> was searching for that human, how could he believe all that so easily?

However, upon investigation, it was true.

One of the underground cells in this city had been taken over, and the door wouldn't open. When did that happen, they did not know. This city had tight security, and it should be quite impossible for an outsider to infiltrate the place, however, it seemed like that thought was an erroneous one.

On top of that, the investigation revealed that there was a human inside the cell. The wavelength of humans are different from the Elves, and it was obvious right away. A terribly unpleasant wavelength.

Furthermore, an anchor that said, *come find me* was dropped.

Broadcasting a signal which only he Elves could understand, an anchor was dropped there.

A human was held in a prison cell of the Elves, and it was broadcasting a signal that was telling others to find the place.

Clearly, there was a scheme going on. Bestlo probably noticed that as well. And he hurriedly reported it.

He was telling him to deal with it before the humans come knocking.

Of course, Slaydor moved right away.

First, he erased the anchor. Following that, he ordered his subordinates to open that door and release the human.

But the door would not open. It was apparently shut by some powerful seal, and refused to open by whatever means available.

However, they could not let it rest just because of that.

It was a diplomatic issue that concerned the survival of the entire race of Elves.

Right now, they could not afford to go to war with the humans.

Most of the Elves were ignorant of this, but the Elves no longer had the means to fight against the humans.

No.

"....."

At that moment, Slaydor looked at the composed man before him and thought.

"....."

Even though he hated to admit it, but the humans had already progressed to become a race that was far mightier than the Elves.

Valuing tradition, the Elves had vovwed to coexist with the spirits and had not changed.

On the other hand, for the humans, they have assimilated all kinds of magic. Devouring them incessantly like mad.

Be it gods, be it demons, be it spirits, or demon god, it didn't matter.

As long as it was power, they would get hold of it, assimilate it, and move on.

Before long, the humans had already advanced to a stage where the Elves couldn't touch them.

So advanced that they could be called monsters.

And right now, the human before him spoke.

"..... now, if I don't get a clear answer right now, I'd have to report it to the << **Military** >>. When that happens, with our power and authority, I'm sure you know what will happen to this country right?"

Said Kurosu.

He said it cheerfully with a calm face.

*No, maybe this is all a trap of the << **Military** >>?*, Slaydor thought.

If that's the case, then only doom awaits.....

But, at that moment, a report came in from his subordinate.

Using the power of the spirits, a voice sounded directly in his head.

"Your Majesty..... just now, a message offering a trade came from inside the cell."

On hearing that, Slaydor smiled at Kurosu,

"Will you give us some time perhaps? As I've communicated earlier, we don't remember imprisoning any human, however, for the benefit of doubt, we started investigations and somehow, it seems like a lead has come up."

> **Slaydor's speech:** Note that Slaydor is using humble form when speaking to Kurosu.

On hearing that, Kurosu's eyes widened a little.

"Horh. Then, I shall wait for a little longer."

"Are you willing to do that for us?"

"Yes. It's not like we're feeling mischievous and come to play a prank on you, then crush you."

Said Kurosu.

If we want to, we can crush you easily, his relaxed face said.

On hearing that, Slaydor's face grimaced again. But he bore with it, and said,

"..... I'm grateful. Then, I'll prepare another room for you. So please wait for a little longer."

He said.

Kurosu nodded.

"Then. I'll take a short rest. But....."

"Yes. I won't want to be holding you up for too long. Then, Kurosu-san, please help yourself to your room. Ah Kurosu-san, if you are like other humans, and have an interest in Elven women, then....."

On hearing those words, Kurosu, who was just about to step out of the room, turned around.

And he stared at Slaydor with a pair of scornful, gray-colored eyes.

He stared at the King of the Elf country with scornful eyes,

"Don't grovel too much. The << **Military** >> really has no interest in this place. Otherwise, they would just crush you without doing things in such a roundabout manner. So there's no need to perform such an extent of subservice."

After saying that, he smiled. And bowed his head.

"However, I appreciate those thoughts of yours. I shall report to the higher ups of the << **Military** >> that King Slaydor is friendly towards the << **Military** >>."

"Y-you will do that?"

"Yes. That is, if things go well, for the issue at hand."

Upon saying that, he turned on his heel again. Then, led by his subordinate, Kurosu exited the room.

Looking at his departing figure.

Looking at his departing figure,

"..... damn."

Muttered the Elf King softly.

But, that groaning voice was already too late.

It was late by hundreds of years.

The Elves had been complacent about their power and stopped progressing.

And consequently, he had thrown away his pride, and had chosen to play subservient role in order to survive.

When a tremendous power was born, which could have led them forward, it was given to the humans in exchange for their protection.

And this was the result.

He could no longer see themselves to be of any threat to the humans.

Like an ant crawling by the roadside, there was nothing they could do, he thought.

Of course, if it came to war, it would probably result in casualties, but in the end, the humans would be the ones to win. That's why there was no need for him to show any respect.

He merely needed to smile, *if you don't want to be stepped on, be careful*, and threaten him with that.

"....."

Slaydor stood up. He then said to the subordinate who had spoken in his head.

"..... let's accept the trade. What did they say?"

The voice then answered.

"Tell us the location of Ela of the East, the one you've betrayed. If you tell us that, we'll release the human, they said."

On hearing those words, he understood what had happened.

Ela of the East.

That was the name of the traitorous slut who had consorted with a taboo demon.

She was supposed to become the wife of the King of Fleneld Kingdom. That was decided when she was born. Because of the immense power she possessed, it was decided for her to become part of the royalty.

However, regardless of that, that woman betrayed everything. Consorting with a forbidden monster, she gave birth to hideous children.

Of course, all of the Elves' royalty were mad with anger. They wanted to kill her children, and her as well.

But, she laughed at that.

That slut laughed.

Do you know why I've consorted with him? You all look so pathetic, so ugly, she had mocked them.

Pitiful Elves who bow down to the humans, do you think you can do anything to me?

And the truth was they couldn't do anything at all.

All the spirits loved her, and the Elves could not call on their power to strike her.

Then, the Elves sold her off.

To the humans.

Since they were unable to do anything to her, they sought the human's help. *We'll hand over all her power, so please do something about it*, they had sought after the humans' help.

The humans accepted it readily.

Those fellows loved to tear apart a monster's body to do research on them.

She went on a rampage and killed the humans. Numerous humans were killed.

But before long, her energy was spent.

The humans were good in dealing with monsters. Tearing at her four limbs, they had sealed her, and then said.

If you cooperate with us in our research, we'll let your children off, how about it?

The humans had said to her.

And she relented readily.

In order to protect her children, she let the humans take her.

On top of that, a curse was placed on the children. A curse that would prevent them from laying a hand on the humans.

Her sons, known as Serge and Hasga by their first names, and were given Entolio as their last names. They themselves didn't know about the curse. They did not know about the curse that would prevent them from going against that human organization.

As far as he could remember, the humans who took away Ela of the East was an organization known as the << **Church** >>. In reality, it was the royalty of the east who had come into contact with them, so Slaydor did not know the details, but, it seemed like the << **Church** >> was yet another strange organization of a different nature from the << **Military** >>.

But in the end, the things they did were not that significant.

They were always only, in a crude manner, seeking to devour and assimilate the various magic disciplines in the world.

The humans have twelve great organizations and they were all the same.

They would do anything to acquire power.

The twelve organizations competed for hegemony, and scattered the sparks of their conflicts to the surrounding worlds.

This time, there's a possibility that they might get caught up in those sparks, Slaydor thought.

Between the << **Church** >> and the << **Military** >>.

The names of the two organizations had turned up. If he made a wrong move, all the Elves in this country might be killed.

At that thought.

"....."

Slaydor said.

"Then, the ones in the cells are the Entolio brothers?"

The voice answered.

"It would seem so."

"They want us to let them see their mother?"

"No. They merely want us to tell them where she is. We know you sold her off to the humans, tell us which organization it is, they said."

"I see."

"How should we respond?"

"Let me talk to them directly. Connect me up."

"Yes sir."

After the subordinate said that, some time went by.

Following that, a thin mass of light lit up on the ceiling. It was a spell that connected the throne room to the other place for communication to take place.

After ascertaining that, Slaydor said.

"The Entolio brothers?"

"Yeah."

"Who is it? Serge, or Hasga?"

"I don't need to tell you my name."

"I see."

"Let's get on with it quickly. You won't want to spend too much time talking with the ill-omened half-breeds right?"

"..... yeah."

"Then speak. Which organization did you sell Ela of the East to?"

"If I tell you that, what will you do? Do you want to save her?"

"That's none of your concern."

"But, it'd be impossible for you. You have been cursed to not be able to touch that organization....."

But, cutting off those words, the Entolio brother said.

"We know. But that's not your business right? Hurry up and spill the name of that organization. You should know who the royalty sold her to. Speak the name of that organization."

"..... if I say it, we'll be targeted by the humans as traitors."

*"That's right. But if you don't say it, you'll be targeted by the << **Military** >> this time. Whoever it is, they are humans. The Elf King sure is in hot soup."*

"If you already know that."

"I don't care about your dilemma. But, we'll execute it flawlessly. Even if you tell us the location of the Ela of the East, we'll make our move in such a way that they won't even realize that you've betrayed them. So, it'd be better to tell us the place, won't it?"

"..... I can't trust you."

*"You don't need to. But, in due time, you will just be crushed by the << **Military** >>. In the end, you don't have much of a choice. If you can open this door and kill us, it'll be different story though, but you can't do that right?"*

"..... yeah. Just like Ela of the East, we are not a match for you in terms of power. It's our mistake. We should have made Ela and the both of you our comrades. To think we have sold her to the humans....."

*"Yeah yeah, enough of the blabbering. We don't care about how you feel now. Hurry up and get on with it, tell us where Ela of the east is. Which organization did you sell her to? If you don't tell us quickly, you'll get crushed by the << **Military** >>, you know?"*

On hearing those words, Slaydor breathed out a small sigh.

That's right.

He was the one who was running out of time.

To betray the << **Church** >> or to betray the << **Military** >>?

He had to make a choice.

However, it was too big a responsibility for him to make that choice alone. It was a big decision that should be made by the four kings who were spread out in four directions.

However, there was no time.

There was no time for that.

In that case, he had to decide.

"..... can I trust you?"

Said Slaydor.

"..... if I tell you the name of the organization, will you swear not to do harm on us?"

The Elf King said.

The Entolio brothers then replied. In a tone of slight delight,

"Are you so afraid because of the horrible things you've done to us?"

"....."

"But, you can trust us. In our job, our word is our bond. We'll answer you with that word of ours."

"....."

"Now speak. Which organization did you hand Ela of the East to?"

To that question, Slaydor answered.

He gave them the name of the << **Church** >>.

The Entolio brother then said.

*"Got it. Right now, buy us ten hours of time from the << **Military** >>. Within that duration, everything will be resolved."*

"No way. Such a long time....."

*"If that can't be done, then just go get crushed by the << **Military** >>. But if you can buy us that amount of time, we'll keep our promise. We'll release the human we've abducted. That's all to our talk."*

"Wait....."

But, with that, everything ended.

They've severed the magic on their side.

His voice could no longer reach them.

With a pale face filled with despair, Slaydor issued an order to his subordinate.

"..... let me meet Kurosu once more. And ask for some time. But, if Kurosu is not agreeable to it, then....."

If he's not agreeable to it, then we have to kill Kurosu, he thought.

After killing Kurosu, he would sell his body and the Entolio brothers to the << **Church** >>.

He would then get the << **Church** >> to protect this Elf world from the << **Military** >>.

To protect themselves from the humans, they had to grovel before humans.

Then,

"..... damn. This is really a thin rope to walk on."

After moaning that, Slaydor started walking. He prayed that the talk with Kurosu would go well.

Chapter 6 - The Organization That Erases The World’s Terribleness

After school.

Chime.

Classroom.

Desk.

Blackboard.

The school at night always felt a little out of place. Especially the night of this Miyasaka High has always been so.

When the monsters from other worlds, and the magical beings that escaped from the labs of the << **Military** >> prowl along the school compound, the whole place would feel like a haunted house.

But, even so.

"....."

When he thought about the fact that he might not be able to return to this world, for some reason, he found it hard to leave even such an unpleasant school.

The place where Taito was now was the student council room.

At nine in the night, Gekkou came to pick him up, and by the time he passed through the << **Way** >> into this room, it was probably around 9.03.

In the school council room, Gekkou, Mirai, and Himea as well had assembled, ready to set off for the world where the elves live, but.

In order to ensure that the << **Military** >> wouldn't come after them, Gekkou had to activate the traps he had placed in the school beforehand. For that to happen, Gekkou chanted some incantation which Taito did not really understand, and some strange words appeared on the whiteboard.

"So the traps are activated with that?"

Asked Taito, and from beside him,

"That's the words of Wharf right. I thought it was already a lost magic."

Himea said.

Gekkou then replied.

"The << **Military** >> restored it. During clashes with other organizations, it's useful to employ magic unknown to the other party. That's reviving lost magic is an important task to the << **Military** >>."

On hearing those words, Taito asked.

"But then, if it is a magic restored by the << **Military** >>, then they can stop it right?"

However, without turning around, Gekkou said delightedly.

"I've burned the documents for this form of magic. While I don't know where the originals are left, but they won't be accessible to the underlings. In other words, until the higher ups have been informed of our disappearance, they won't be able to disable this trap."

Well, even he didn't really understand it, for now, this trap would be effective against the << **Military** >>, it seemed.

"So how long will it take for the traps to be laid?"

"Five minutes."

"Then, you could at least do it before we....."

But, cutting him off, Gekkou said.

"If I laid them beforehand, and if you guys were late, then the << **Military** >> would get a wind of this.

"Aah, I see."

"That's how it is, idiot."

"Whichever way, we are idiots right."

Gekkou then smiled.

"That's right. There's no doubt that you are all idiots. Since it's not a sane thing to go against the << **Military** >>."

"Then, aren't you also an idiot?"

"Yeah. That's right. But I'm a genius."

"Heeehhh ~"

Taito said with half-opened eyes. Following that, his eyes shifted from Gekkou to another place.

A beautiful face that was looking happily at him, without any sense of nervousness, and the other with a Dr. Pepper in her hand, the face of the lightning girl.

After looking at the both of them, Taito turned towards the window behind him.

In the window glass, was the faint reflection of his.

The reflection of an ordinary, high school freshman brat.

Looking at that, Taito thought.

"....."

Maybe I'm really an idiot, he thought.

For an ordinary kid like him, to go against a humongous organization that appeared to have ties to the country, was nothing short of madness.

On top of that, his comrades who were reflected in the glass, were mostly not human.

The stuck up student council president who has a bad personality.

The demon Andou Mirai.

Saitohimea.

And then, an ordinary looking, normal high school freshman.

Looking at that, he thought.

Clearly, he couldn't compare with the rest, he thought.

He might be a human who shouldn't be here, he thought. Really, such a thing should be left to those special fellows who were different from him, and it might be more fitting for him to just tremble at home, he thought.

Of course, if he did that, he would probably regret it, and would probably be unable to forgive himself for the rest of his life, but, he was also certain that there wouldn't be many people who would be able to forgive themselves in the same situation.

Everyone would just live a life where they would always feel some regret, and blaming themselves, who had tried their hardest.

Probably no one would criticize that.

That was why, if he wanted to back out, now was the final moment, he thought.

Somehow, even when he had given everything he got to have come to this point, if he wanted to run away, now was the final moment, while thinking about that,

"Hurry up, Gekkou."

Said Taito.

"Otherwise, I will start getting scared."

He spoke candidly.

Gekkou then said. Without turning around.

"Of course. Even I'm scared."

He said.

That Gekkou said that he was scared so readily.

Taito's eyes widened.

"You must be kidding. If even you are scared, then this is seriously terrible."

"Didn't I tell you at the start? Only idiots would go against the << **Military** >> in this country."

"Are we going to die?"

"Who knows?"

"That's troubling."

"But it's too late for regrets. The trap's completed."

"Aah, is that so? Then."

Taito said.

"Then, it can't be helped."

He said.

Even though the truth was he should be feeling bad about it, but recently he had been feeling remarkably numb about it, and he didn't really hate that about himself.

"....."

He looked at his own face in window glass again. Even though it was the face of a brat, he could feel a hardened determination in his face. That ain't too bad, he thought.

At the very least, compared to the days after he stopped karate because of his injured leg tendon, every day was a fulfilling one.

If he could save Haruka, and protect Himea from the enemies that might come attacking in the future, he would be someone who can be even prouder of himself than the old him.

Even if there was a chance that he wouldn't be able to return to this world.

Even if there was a chance that he wouldn't be able to see his family anymore.

"....."

At that moment, the face in the window glass contorted. Initially, Taito thought it was his face that had contorted.

But that's not it. Clearly, the scenery reflected in the window was squirming, and started contorting as if it were twisting light.

"Gekkou."

Said Taito.

He then said, with a tone of irritation,

"It's already completed. Keep quiet."

Even when he said that, Taito couldn't keep quiet.

"No, this seems to be real bad. The window's contorting, it's like it's approaching us..... could it be that the << **Military** >> has noticed us....."

But, at that moment,

"There's no problem. The traps has been completed."

At the moment Gekkou said that, the room seemed to be filled with light. Clearly, some magic was being deployed in this room, no, in the whole school.

But Gekkou continued.

"With this, the fellas in the << **Military** >> won't be able to come after us for a while."

He said.

But Taito asked,

"..... is that so?"

He looked ahead of him. He looked at the window glass which was contorting with greater intensity. He looked at the window glass which seemed to give him the feeling that something was about to penetrate it and invade into this room,

"Erm, I'm not really sure how magic works, but somehow, this is ringing alarm bells in me....."

At that moment, from beside him,

"Oh."

Himea uttered with a note of surprise in her voice.

"Cool..... the Wharf spell words are disappearing."

"What."

Gekkou then turned around as well. And looked at the window glass. At that time, a hole had already started forming in the glass.

And beyond the hole, there was light.

The night outside the school should already be dark, but yet beyond the hole, it was filled with light.

Gekkou frowned.

"Damn. Did the fellas from the << **Military** >> already solved the entire Wharf script?"

But, upon saying that, Himea shook her head.

"No. It's probably something else. Someone who does not understand a thing about Wharf is forcing their way in."

"How can that be? If they do that, the trap will....."

"It's not activating. The trap's being erased. Taito!"

Himea said. She then grabbed hold of his shoulders. With that she pulled him back and started a step forward.

"Something bad is coming. Stay back."

She said to him.

On hearing those words, Taito smiled wryly,

"Er no, those were my lines. I'll protect Himea. It's for that purpose that I'm immortal."

Upon saying that, he stood forward, even further in front, before Himea, who was moving forward.

"But."

"No buts. And, rely a little bit more on me. Or I'll look bad."

He said, to which she looked troubled for an instant, then she smiled,

"Alright."

She said.

"Well, let's do it."

"Aah."

"So, who's coming?"

But, Himea shook her head. And she started with a 'but' again.

"But for them to undo the Wharf spell script so quickly..... their magic might be more powerful than mine."

She said.

Someone who has magic more powerful than a master of all magic, Vampire << Most Ancient Sorcerer >>, wait, isn't that a monster! Taito wanted to say

but gave up. Saying that was akin to calling Himea a monster, and somehow, he felt that it might lead to problematic things later on, so for now,

"That sounds real terrible."

He said, and tensed his body up. Whatever's going to happen, in any case, he tensed up his body to become the shield of Himea.

From beside him, Gekkou drew his sword. A slender, sharp, long sword. A jet black blade, with a crescent shaped bellguard.

That was a sword known as Spell Error Wicked Blade, which was made to exorcise all forms of demonic power, but, as for the details, well, Taito was too sure of them.

Anyway, it is a powerful sword which can form a threat to the demon Mirai, and also the << Vampire Most Ancient Sorcerer >> Himea, that much he knew.

On top of that, Gekkou had another weapon beside him.

As usual, she was holding a Dr. Pepper in one hand,

"The atmosphere seems pretty bad!"

Mirai said as her hair was grabbed.

"Wah wah wah!"

Gekkou pulled Mirai towards him, and forcibly further went on to,

"Uwah ~, geez, Gekkou is always so forceful..... always....."

Forcefully kiss Mirai's forehead. In that instant, the seal put on her was released.

The demon powers of Mirai which had been sealed by Gekkou's sword returned.

The rabbit mascot hair fastener which was used to tie her hair into a ponytail came off, and her hair started glowing golden. On op of that, those hair were dancing in the air like flashes of lightning, and Mirai said.

"My powers reeeetuuurneeddd but, I really love that hair rubberband!"

She carefully picked up the rabbit mascot hair fastener. And put it into her skirt pocket. Her gentle eyes furiously, fearfully, narrowly, glared at Gekkou,

"Make sure you buy a new one for me!"

She said.

But, of course, now's not the time for that. Gekkou ignored Mirai, and glowered at the hole in the window glass. Then,

"Is this a << **Way** >>? Saitohimea."

He said.

Himea nodded.

"Probably."

"But, why is a << **Way** >> opening here? There's a barrier that prevents other << **Ways** >> from opening into this Holy Ground....."

However, from the other side of the rift, someone said.

"I've undone that barrier, Student Council President Kurenai Gekkou."

A young man's voice was heard.

It was a voice which they had never heard before.

But, the other party appeared to know the name of the student council president here.

Taito asked.

"Is that your acquaintance?"

But, Gekkou shook his head.

"No. I have no acquaintance who will barge in rudely onto my turf. Except for my younger brother....."

On hearing those words, Taito became even more tense.

Hinata.

Kureani Hinata.

That was the name of Gekkou's little brother who has demons as his servants.

And when that Hinata attacked them, they had been put in numerous serious situations.

Taito had been killed seven time, causing him unable to revive, Himea was imprisoned for nine years thanks to him, and he was the cause of Gekkou's huge complex.

But Hinata should have died. Combining the powers of Taito, Himea, Gekkou, and Mirai, he should have been defeated by them.

But yet,

"Hinata you said, is he still alive?"

But Gekkou did not reply.

"..... he's coming."

On saying that, he readied his sword. And lowered his body. With the sword in his right hand, it crossed over to the front of his chest and was drawn near to beside his head.

That stance was largely different from the one that Taito studied in a fencing book in preparation for his next quarrel with Gekkou. It was probably closer to the stance of a saber, he thought, but, this fella is always exaggerating, and fast.

Gekkou said.

"..... everyone who enters here without permission are all enemies. There's no need for talk. As soon as they appear, kill them."

He ordered.

Mirai then went,

"Orhh!"

And raised both her hands. Lightning masses resided in both her hands.

Himea looked at Taito.

"Then, Taito, I'll be using a magic that will take some time, so protect me, will you?"

She said.

Taito nodded.

"Of course."

"But."

"Yeah."

"If you die twice, step back. We don't know what kind of enemies we are facing, so until we understand the situation....."

"Decrease the number of times I die right. Ok. I'll do my best."

Upon saying that, Taito stood in front of Himea. And adopted a stance. His basic stance was that of a karate stance but, it was very much different from what he had learned before. Since at any rate, there was no need for him to defend. Since he could afford to die once or twice, quite naturally, his stance had shifted to focusing on offense.

And he looked.

At the rift opening in the window which had enlarged enough for one person to pass through.

Gekkou said.

"Kurogane."

"Huh?"

"Go."

"Aah, I'm the vanguard huh. Alright, I'm going to die once, so open your eyes wide and look properly at the enemy."

After saying that, he started running. And brought up his fist, preparing to launch it towards whoever was coming through the rift from the other side.

Bringing out all his power.

But, in the midst of it,

"..... ugh."

In the midst of it, his fist stopped. His body stopped. His entire body ceased to move.

The reason was because before him.

Before his eyes,

"....."

Was the girl whom he knew very well.

It was Haruka.

Shigure Haruka.

Beautiful black medium hair, a kind face.

Taito looked intently at that. Eyes widening, he stared.

Her slender body was clad in Miyasaka sailor uniform, and that uniform was a little dirty.

Both her hands were bounded in chains, and she was unconscious.

Looking at that.

He wanted to say something.

But, words didn't come.

Overwhelmed with various emotions blended together, he was at a loss for words.

But, he knew the feelings that were swirling deep inside him.

Anger.

Swelling anger that seemed to threaten to rip his uniform into shreds.

Who's the one who caused Haruka to look like this? I'll find him and kill him.

Thought Taito.

Then, as if to answer those thoughts of his, the perpetrator appeared.

From behind Haruka, his face popped out.

It was a man. With a strangely well featured face, a beautiful face that resembled that of an Elf. However, the atmosphere around him was different from that of an elf.

With deep blue hair that was as long as that of an Elf, and golden piercing eyes. He appeared to be older than Taito by a year or two.

That young looking man said.

"..... it won't be too good to attack right? We have a hostage here."

On hearing those words, Taito said.

He said in a voice that was unconsciously shaking with anger.

"..... bastard, what the hell did you do to Haruka?"

Even while saying that, his eyes were fixated on Haruka.

Her clothes were dirty. Her hands were bounded, and she had lost consciousness. She had already been imprisoned for more than two weeks.

What on earth happened during this time?

Thinking about that, thinking about that ---

At that moment, the man replied.

"If you don't do anything, we won't do anything. Since she's an important hostage."

"..... do you use chains on an important hostage?"

"..... hn? Oh, you mean this?"

"Don't f*** with me."

"Say, that reaction, perhaps you are the Kurogane Taito that Haruka mentioned?"

"..... aah? What did you just say?"

"Like I said, are you Kurogane....."

But, cutting him off, Taito said.

"Haruka? Calling your hostage by her name, what the hell did you guys do to her? I won't forgive you. I definitely, definitely won't forgive you bastards....."

I'm going to kill you, he wanted to say, but his mouth was clamped shut from behind.

"Calm down Kurogane. I understand your feelings, but if you let the anger get to you, and move without thinking, the situation won't just turn around like that."

He said. Taito tried to pull away Gekkou's hand that was covering his mouth, but Gekkou was seriously applying his strength, and he couldn't just brush it away like that.

The conversation proceeded.

The man said.

"..... it's good that there's someone who's willing to talk. I'm not really that fluent in human language, and I fear that I've failed in convincing Kurogane Taito."

To those words, Gekkou said.

"By convince, you mean to say that you've come here to negotiate with us about something right?"

The man nodded.

"If not, we won't take the risk to infiltrate into the territory of the << **Military** >>."

"Haah. This is not the territory of the << **Military** >> though."

"Ah? Really? Then who's domain is it?"

"Mine."

"Hahaha."

"..... hn? Are you mocking me? If you are, then the negotiations are off. I'm going to kill you now....."

Just as Gekkou was bring up his sword, this time round, it was Himea who clamped his mouth shut from behind.

"Wait a minute! Why are you guys so hot blooded!"

She said. Following that, Himea looked intently at the man,

"Hurry up and speak your conditions. Whether we accept or not depends on what it is. And also, be mindful of your words, half-breed."

She said.

The man then looked in the direction of Himea, with a smile surfacing.

"Orhshya, finally, it's time for battle!?"

Gekkou and Taito then yelled at the same time,

""It's time to stop!""

Mirai then rolled her eyes,

"Eh? Eh? Really? Erm, Hime-chan, it's time to stop, they said."

Himea then acknowledged.

"I don't take orders from a demon."

Upon saying that, her magic became larger and more powerful.

Gekkou then started,

"Enough, stop....."

"Shut up human."

The magic grew even larger, and finally,

"Wait, Himea, please."

Said Taito, and instantly.

"Alright <3."

And that was how things turned out.

Himea promptly stopped her magic, and hugged Taito happily. Before the unconscious Haruka, Himea hugged his chest.

Taito then began frantically,

"Wait, Himea, this is not the time for this. Erm, we're in the middle of a fight. I think we're in the middle of a fight with some awesome fella!"

But Himea said.

"I've finished the incantation of the magic, so it'll be fine. And Taito, you don't need to be concerned with Haruka-chan as well, if that guy says, *Kill*, at any time, even Haruka can get annihilated together with him!"

"Wait, I'll really be concerned with that though."

"Then, don't leave my side anymore!"

"I don't really get it..... aah, jeez, erm....."

Taito turned his head again to face the man. He glowered at him. Right now, since Himea was clinging to his chest, he didn't feel any tension, but, if Himea was not feeling tension at all, that would mean she was very clear that the other party had really come to negotiate, he thought.

So Taito looked intently at the man, and asked.

"..... let me just ask you one thing. Then we'll talk."

On hearing his words, the man said.

"I'm the one with a hostage, so don't start getting cocky with me. But, fine. Since you have a monster there that won't get threatened by a hostage, I don't have a choice. So, what do you want to know?"

Taito then said.

"What did you do to Haruka....."

But, the man cut him off,

"There's nothing to fear. Nothing unfortunate at the level which you are capable of imagining has happened to her."

He said.

However, he was bothered by the way he said it. Nothing unfortunate at the level which he was capable of imagining ---- what did that mean?

Did that mean a misfortune which was so great that it was beyond his capability to imagine had befallen Haruka?

He thought.

Taito wanted to open his mouth further, but the man continued.

"At the very least, we didn't do anything. Her misfortune was there since her birth. However, it is not our right to tell you about that. Regarding that, you have to ask the actual person in question."

"Wait, what on earth are you talking....."

But the man cut him off and said.

"We don't have that much time. We are contacting you without the << **Military's** >> knowledge. We have another ten minutes before they catch on to us. If they do, then it'll be just as bad for you guys right?"

Gekkou then said.

"That's right."

"Then let's talk."

"It's my bad not knowing how tactless you are."

At those words, the man smiled again.

"So it's my fault."

"Of course."

"Hahaha, you guys are really interesting. I'm starting to worry whether we should really leave things to you. I'm a blunt person huh. Well, maybe I shouldn't really threaten you, and it might be better to let the more tactful Serge negotiate with you huh....."

Upon saying that, the man turned around. Then, he brought Haruka behind him. Following that, someone took over her body. Somehow, it appeared that he had a comrade on the other side.

Rather, he was purposely showing to them that he had a comrade there.

Taito grimaced.

The possible choice of a preemptive attack and snatching Haruka away during the opening which would appear when he's on the defensive had disappeared.

During the time when he was passing Haruka to someone behind him, Gekkou said softly.

"Saitohimea."

"Uhn?"

"Just now, you said that he's a half-breed?"

"Yeah."

"What do you mean? Do you know him?"

But she shook her head.

"Nope. But, I could tell that he has Elf blood mixed with something else since I'm able to see the power flow in him"

"Power flow?"

"Yeah. An incomplete but a large power flow. Usually, when Elf blood is mixed, that kind of thing happens. Since they value only pure blood, when the blood is mixed, the suppression power of the gene is gone, and the blood goes wild. Normally, when born, the child will get swallowed up by its own power though, half-breeds who survive are strong."

"I see."

"Yeah."

"So we don't have a chance in winning?"

To that question, Himea tilted her head as she considered.

"If the opponent is just one person, then it's possible....."

"If he has comrades?"

"Depends on the numbers. And also on the power of his species as well. It's important to factor in the usefulness of magic battles."

"..... he clearly has a comrade."

"Yeah."

"Then."

On saying that, Gekkou sheathed his sword. And then,

"Then, it's a boring development."

He said.

Upon saying that, the man turned around once again. Realizing that Gekkou had sheathed his sword,

"Don't make such a bored face."

He smiled.

Gekkou then said,

"Hurry up and speak."

"I've been doing that right at the start."

"Whatever, get on with it."

Gekkou said.

The man smiled again. And started his explanation.

"If you want Shigure Haruka back, then there are conditions we want you to fulfill."

"Hm."

"Have you heard of the witch called Ela of the East?"

But, Gekkou cocked his head and then turned towards Himea. As if she remembered something, Himea began,

"..... aah, she's supposed to be in line to become the concubine of the previous king right? I've heard that she went mad and was killed....."

The man then nodded.

"The truth, she didn't go mad. And she's not dead."

On hearing his words, Gekkou said.

"And so?"

"We want you to rescue that Ela of the East."

"From who?"

"The << **Church** >>."

The man said.

The << **Church** >> --- Taito knew that name.

This was again, another large organization that stands alongside the << **Military** >>. Even though he didn't really know which country was it based in and what kind of organization it was for now, at any rate, it had bought Himea from the << **Military** >> and had imprisoned her for nine whole years.

The man continued.

"The << **Church** >> had confined her in their prison. We want you to rescue her from there."

But Gekkou answered.

"Impossible. If you're talking about the << **Church** >>, with its scale, it is widespread around the world. Just in Japan alone, there are a number of branches....."

"We know the place. So as to speak, the only place with the power to seal her would have to be their central place."

"Italy huh."

"Yeah."

"But, in that case, it's much more impossible. With only our power, to march into the headquarters of the << **Church** >> and rescue a witch, it's even more foolish than to march into the city of the Elves."

Upon saying that, the man smiled.

"It's possible with the power of this << **Holy Ground** >> right? The power possessed by the << **Holy Ground** >> in this school is a special one. Whatever the seals, whatever the barriers, it can ignore them and open a << **Way** >> to any place instantly. If you have the coordinates, you'll definitely be able to go right into the heart of the prison where Ela of the East is held....."

"Yeah, you're right. We can open a << **Way** >>. But, the << **Church** >> will definitely noticed an intruder. If you think we are willing to go to the extent of making the << **Church** >> our enemies to save Shigure Haruka....."

"Hey, wait!"

Taito said from beside him.

But, *shut up*, Gekkou seemed to say to him with a signal of his hand. He then continued.

"But it's not like we can't lend you a hand. We'll open a << **Way** >>. As for the rest, you'd have to go directly to the << **Church** >>....."

However, cutting him off, the man said.

"We can't go to the << **Church** >>. A curse of that nature has been placed on us."

"Don't shit me. To be able to undo the barrier erected over this student council room, you're telling me you can't undo that curse, you're shitting me right?"

On hearing those words, for some reason, the man became a little sad.

"..... because it's a curse that's placed over our names, it's really impossible. But, that's fine. Different from the elves, we're kind of fond of the names we bear."

He mumbled something incomprehensible, then looked at them again.

"Anyway, we'll have you go save Ela of the East. If you can't do that, it's fine as well. Shigure Haruka just have to die. Now, what'll you do? I'll leave the decision to you guys."

Being told that in his face.

"....."

Gekkou kept silent.

Mirai appeared bored.

Himea looked at Taito. She looked at him with a worried face.

Among all these people, there were probably none who were truly worried about the safety of Haruka and willing to risk their lives for her.

He was probably the only one who wanted to save Haruka.

Going against the << **Military** >>, and even to the extent of infiltrating the << **Church** >> in order to save Haruka.

It would be a foolish tall order.

It would quite unthinkable that they would be able to continue living in this world after getting targeted by the << **Military** >> and the << **Church** >>, two large organizations of this world.

Of course, everyone would hesitate.

There was no way anyone would want to risk their life for something which had zero benefit to them.

That was why Taito wanted to say.

Then I'll go alone, he wanted to say. She was probably aware that he would say that, that's why Himea looked at him worriedly.

Despite having made a promise with Himea. Himea looked anxiously at the Taito who had despite promising her that he would protect her, was going to go save the life of another girl.

He knew that.

He knew that, but even so, he could not just sit around and do nothing about Haruka.

"....."

That's why Taito wanted to say.

I'll go alone to the << ***Church*** >>, he wanted to say.

However, before he could say that, Himea said.

"Alright. I'll go. Since I still have a score to settle with the << **Church** >> for my past confinement..... I really want to scare the shit out those << **Church** >> whinnies."

She said.

On hearing that, Taito looked at Himea in surprise. And,

"....."

She smiled sadly.

Taito then wanted to say something, but, he was cut off.

Since for some reason,

"Fine."

Said Gekkou.

"It's an idiotic thing, but I'll tag along."

He said.

"I shall have both the << **Military** >> and the << **Church** >> tremble at my great power."

He said something stupid.

The man then smiled again,

"Then, the deal is struck. If you can free Ela of the East from the << **Church** >>, we'll release Shigure Haruka."

After having his words preempted here and there, Taito said.

"Hey wait a minute. Is it really ok? This is a serious thing right? We're not just talking about going against the << **Military** >>, but the << **Church** >> as well, isn't this really serious?"

What are you talking about at this point in time, Gekkou's face seemed to say as he spoke,

"It's obvious right."

Then,

"Then, why are you accepting it? I mean I want to save Haruka but, as for you guys..... there's no need to....."

There's no need to go to that extent right, he was about to say.

Just as he was about to say that, Gekkou swung his fist for some reason, and it struck the face of Taito.

With that, of course, Taito couldn't continue further. Grimacing at the intense pain on his face, *bastard, what're you doing?*, he wanted to say.

But, before he could say that,

"Don't order me around, small fry. I'm the decider of everything the student council undertakes."

Gekkou said.

Then, for some reason, Mirai started cheerfully,

"Hey you know, Mr Immortal, previously, Gekkou had said, *don't put me at the level of second rate brother, I'm not the kind who betrays my*....."

But, in the midst of those words, Gekkou sent Mirai flying with a kick on her face.

"Kyaaaaaaaa ♪."

For some reason, Mirai was crying out happily as she was sent flying.

Taito could only stare, dumbfounded, and he then looked at Gekkou,

"..... are you seriously....."

"Shut up."

"Erm."

"Shut up."

"You really are a good guy..... gua."

He was struck again. This time, Gekkou hit him seriously, and consequently, the sound of a broken nose was heard. Of course, it went back to normal immediately, but the pain was terrible.

It was so terribly painful that,

"I'm going to kill you, bastard!"

Taito cried out angrily.

A smile then surfaced on Gekkou.

"That's fine. Let's get on with it."

He averted his eyes from Taito, and looked at the man.

The man then said.

"Are you done playing?"

"Yeah."

"Then, have you decided on infiltrating into the << **Church** >>?"

Gekkou laughed.

"That's what I've intended all along, It's just a matter of being early instead of being late."

"Heeeh."

"You guys should remember this well. We'll definitely make you pay for what you've done this time. I'm going to make a great organization that will never yield to the << **Military** >>, as well as the << **Church** >>."

"..... that sounds like a pretty big dream."

"It's not a dream. It'll become a fact."

"Hahaha, a weak dog barks a lot."

"That's only for now. I'll make you regret your mockery at me one day."

"Really?"

"Yeah."

The man then nodded.

"Then, it'll be great if that happens. But right now, what you guys have to do now is to rescue Ela of the East. The time limit is ten hours. When that passes, the << **Military** >> will probably attack the elves. Well, not like we care what happens to the elves."

At that moment, the rift in the window started closing.

"Well, at any rate, do your best. The coordinates are Vatican-Amirose-Frua. I'm looking forward to good news."

With that, the man started disappearing.

Taking Haruka away from there, he started disappearing.

Taito could not do anything about it.

With Haruka taken away from him again, the situation had worsened.

Taito then said.

"..... so well, are we going to the << **Church** >> right now?"

Gekkou nodded.

"That's right."

"What about the Elf world?"

"There's no longer any need to go there."

"But, it's clearly a worse thing than going to the Elf world right?"

Said Taito.

"It's going according to plan."

"Don't lie."

Gekkou then smiled.

"You did hear part of my grand plan earlier right?"

"Huh? That? This student council will become greater than the << **Military** >> and the << **Church** >>, that stupid thing?"

"That's right. My final goal is world domination."

"Huh?"

"Compared to the scale of that, this thing is just part of the plan."

"No no no, erm, I'm getting the feeling that you are saying something really insane there....."

However, ignoring him, Gekkou promptly said,

"Open."

A rift then opened in the white wall of the student council room. It was probably connected to the << **Church** >>. Following that,

"Saitohimea."

"Hn?"

"Undo the Wharf script trap deployed in the student council room."

"What's the cancellation code?"

"There are two double-layered puzzles on the right."

"What's that? It's not even complex."

A conversation which Taito was unable to comprehend took place, and anyway, they would be going to the << **Church** >> immediately.

"Erm, is there a strategy?"

Taito asked, to which, Gekkou turned to look at him as if he were an idiot,

"Even when I've never been to the << **Church** >> at all?"

"You haven't?"

"Italy is far after all. Besides, I'm not so fond of pizza that I can eat pizza everyday."

From beside him, Mirai then said.

"I like domino pizza though!"

And once again, he learned another piece of useless information. With that, he felt that he was going to tread in too much of an unknown territory of the << **Church** >>, but it couldn't be helped.

"I'm going first."

"Of course."

"Yeah, then."

Tatio looked at the rift in the wall. That rift was connected to the << **Church** >>.

And it was the Vatican in Italy.

To speak of Vatican, it's that. The place which appeared in manga or the news where the Pope resides, he thought. Probably.

In other words, this << **Way** >> was right now connected to Italy.

Upon thinking about that, in truth, he could use this << **Way** > to go on a trip as often as he likes right? He ended up thinking about something foolish.

Instead of going to places like Italy, Hawaii, or Guam, he had always been traveling to other worlds inhabited by only monsters, but the truth is, this thing is pretty useful, he thought for an instant.

However, he did not have the leisure to engage in such thoughts.

Right now, he could not even think about pasta as he looked at the scenery of Italy before him on the other side of the rift.

It was dark.

It was pitch black darkness.

Even the darkness outside of the window was bright compared to that darkness.

"This."

Uttered Taito, to which Gekkou nodded.

"I've connected it to the coordinates specified by that man just now."

"Which means it's a prison?"

"Probably. Is it the same type where you were imprisoned, Saitohimea?"

But she shook her head.

"I was shut inside another dimension."

"Hm. Then it's a different story here. The coordinates belong to Earth, even though they are those of an underground location."

"Underground."

Murmured Taito.

And once again, Taito looked at the unlighted prison. Even though it was a place different from the one where Himea was confined for nine years, but it was probably a similar place. No, hers might be a more horrible place. But she had never spoken about it. She had never told him how she had felt throughout but when he reunited with her, he could tell from her face.

And this time, it was another imprisonment.

Even though he had no idea for how long, and for what purpose had the witch called Ela of the East been imprisoned,

"I really hate the << **Church** >>."

While saying that, Taito took a step forward. Peering into the darkness, he passed through the rift.

With just one step, he was in Italy ---

"....."

While he thinking of that, a smile surfaced at his own foolishness.

Gekkou then spoke from behind him,

"How is it?"

On hearing that, he raised a hand to signal 'wait'.

After passing through the rift, he still could not see anything.

There was not a single light.

How vast was this place?

What kind of place was this?

What kind of building was this?

He didn't know any of that. Given how this place was devoid of light, there was probably no lookout, he thought.

"Perhaps, it's fortunate that it's dark. I have magic which I can use to see in the dark anyway."

He murmured. And he thought of trying out the magic he had acquired earlier in the day.

A magic that will summon a kitten. With the thought of that cat surfacing in his head, he said.

"Iyz."

A strange sounding chant then escaped from his lips.

Instantly, a black light appeared on top of his head, and a kitten was summoned there. With a plod, he could tell that it was sitting right on top of his head.

"There you are, Nyankichi."

As he said that,

"Nya!"

Nyankichi said.

And all of a sudden, his surroundings were lit up. Even though there didn't seem to be any light source, he could have a complete grasp of the entire situation there.

It seemed like this was not the kind of magic that improves his vision to see into the darkness.

Even though there was no light at all, he could everything as clear as it were daylight.

With his eyes which could now see everything, Taito looked around him.

While doing that,

"What is this place-Ni?"

Nyankichi asked from above his head and he answered.

"Italy."

"Italy?"

"Yeah. So, I'm in the middle of some work and kind of busy now, so you can go back."

"You are the one who called me-Ni!"

"You're right about that though..... erm, I'll get you some cat food next time..... ah, wait a minute. If you go back, then this vision which can see through the darkness....."

"Will be gone."

"Then don't go."

"Which way is it-Ni?"

"Hey, stay still on my head. I need to use these eyes to do a search."

It was a place that seemed to be devoid of anything.

What was there was a floor, a ceiling, and the pillars supporting the ceiling. There was no wall. No, there might be, but at the very least, there wasn't any around Taito. It was spacious to the point where no walls could be seen. Then,

"Is a prison cell so spacious?"

Muttered Taito.

Or could it be that Ela of the East was something humongous?

At that moment, a voice sounded again from behind him.

"What's with that cat?"

Asked Gekkou.

Taito turned around. The truth is, I kept it a secret from you and had used another << **Holy Ground** >> to acquire a magic, which of course, was something he couldn't say. Since it was let known to him, he would probably make use of the information that he had gotten hold of in Edelka.

That was why, at that moment when Taito wanted to make some sort of an excuse, Himea said from beside,

"It's a new power that I've given to him."

Gekkou then looked in the direction of Himea,

"New power?"

"That's right."

"What kind of power?"

On hearing that question, Himea's face became a little troubled. And looked at him, even after she had lowered a lifeboat to help him out, she couldn't quite know how to take it from there, her face said.

"An ability to see into the darkness. When I summoned this cat, I can see perfectly even in the darkness."

Taito then said., and *horhh*, Gekkou said.

"That sounds like a convenient power. So the small fry has leveled up?"

"Hey you, we don't who's the real small fry yet."

While saying that, Taito turned to face forward again. He looked at the spacious room which seemed to have been made from marble.

Gekkou then asked,

"So, what do you see?"

Taito shrugged his shoulders and replied.

"Nothing. It's just a super spacious room. So spacious that I can't see the walls."

"Any lookouts?"

"Doesn't seem to have any. But then, in such a dark room, even if there are lookouts....."

There won't any meaning to it, he wanted to say but, at that juncture, he realized he could see some sort of a dot from far away.

It was really small, that he thought he must be seeing things initially.

But, that dot gradually became bigger and bigger. It seemed to be approaching them.

Taito then strained his eyes. What the hell is approaching us? He strained his eyes to ascertain it.

Then, he realized what it was.

It was a hand.

A woman's hand.

A woman's pale hand was stretching out, extending towards him, closing in.

Crap, Taito thought while looking at it. Clearly, that hand was aiming for him. Furthermore, the approaching speed was incredibly fast.

By the time he had realized that it was a hand, it was already closing in on him at a tremendous momentum.

Gekkou continued.

"What about the witch? Does she seem to be there?"

He said.

That witch's hand is closing in!!, Taito wanted to yell out frantically.

But, by the time he was about to yell out,

"..... gah."

That hand had already grabbed Taito's neck.

With a strength that seemed to be on the verge of crushing his neck, that hand squeezed Taito.

No voice came. Even as he tried to shake free, it didn't bulge. No, at that moment,

"..... woah."

He was pulled with a great force. With a force that seemed to be powerful enough to bring his body into midair, he was pulled.

From behind him,

"Wha."

Uttered Gekkou, and

"Taito!"

Himea cried out, but in one breath, the voice was far away. He was pulled with such a fast speed that he could no longer breathe against the wind pressure. To compare, it was even faster than a kid putting his head outside of the window of a car along a expressway and having his Dad scolding him. It was so fast that he teared up reflexively.

With that, gradually, gradually, he got further and further away from the dimensional rift connecting the student council room to this place.

Then, Nyankichi who was on top of his head said.

"Hey, what's happening? My eyes can't open-Ni."

On hearing that, Taito replied.

"....."

No, as expected, his voice didn't come with his neck getting strangled.

Nyankichi then said,

"Speak in your head-Ni."

"Hey, I can do that?"

"I'm inside you-Ni. Speak what you want to say with your thoughts-Ni."

"Orh~, awesome, I really can talk with you in this manner!"

"So, what's happening-Ni?"

"I don't know. But it's probably terrible."

"The problem in your neck getting caught lies in the hand-Ni?"

"That's right."

"Curse it!"

"Oh, ah, I see. I have a way to attack....."

On that thought, he looked at the pallid hand that was grabbing him, which didn't loosen its grip no matter how many times he hit at it. So should I attack with the cat's curse, or the flames of the Tenma Martes Devil, he contemplated anxiously.

If he were to use the flames of the Tenma Martes Devil, then he could probably blow away this hand in one blast. Rather, Taito's body would also be blown off and consequently be free from the hand.

Then, what about the cat's curse?

Hmm...., he thought. *What effect will it have? In the first place, it may not even have an effect right?* As he worried about it, at any rate, he clenched his right fist.

And then in his head,

"Why aren't you going to use the curse-Ni!"

"Eh ~, but ~"

"Hurry up and use it-Ni!"

"Hey Nyankichi. I'm going to use a move that is even more dangerous than your curse, so can you disappear for a while? Since on using it, the upper half of my body will be blown away."

"Huh!?"

"Alright, I'm going to start."

"W-Wait a minute, wait a minute-Nya."

At that moment, Taito flung his fist.

However, just as he was about to flung his fist, suddenly, the hand that was pulling him stopped. The extended arm seemed to have finished retracting. He could see the end of that arm. The shoulder of a woman. The shoulder was covered with long hair. Long hair that appeared to be originally golden, but was horribly dirty now. She resembled the girl who had knee-length hair whom he had met in the Elf world.

But, the woman there seemed to look different from an Elf at the same time. She had six arms. Her eyes seemed to have been crushed and covered with talismans. But even so, he could see the beauty in her, and her original appearance must be quite beautiful.

That woman looked at him. She looked intently at him with her eyes which had been sealed by talismans.

"..... stink of a human..... stink of a human..... d-did you come here to experiment on me again?"

She said.

Experiment.

That was what she had said.

That was why she looked like that. She had been imprisoned by the << **Church** >> and experimented on.

The same as Himea.

"....."

Taito wanted to open his mouth but, having his neck constricted rendered him unable to do so.

The woman merely continued.

"The << **Church** >>, humans, if you think you can keep toying with me, you're making a big..... a big, ah, ah-hahahahahahahaahaaa."

Suddenly, the tone of her voice changed. Her mouth split open. Mad hollers started from her mouth.

"..... why, I don't get it..... why am I here..... aah, if I don't get out..... he has it....."

With that, the woman stood up.

And looked around her.

"It's dark, I can't see a thing. I hate darkness."

As she said that, the arms which were sprouting from her back raised. They were raised towards the ceiling. However, the ceiling seemed to possess some kind of special power, and her arms could not reach it.

She then cocked her head.

"Magic huh."

She said.

"Magic against me, magic, ahha, hahahaha....."

After saying that, she looked at him again. She probably couldn't see his appearance.

There was no light at all. Normal eyes shouldn't be able to see anything at all. No, in the first place, even if there were light, whether or not she could see anything at all with those crushed eyes covered by talismans was a question that remained.

But, as if she could see him, she looked down at him.

Nyankichi who was on top of his head then said,

"Hey, master."

He called out to Taito. Then, Taito whose neck was still grabbed by the woman said.

"What is it?"

"Aren't you going to send this woman flying-Ni?"

"Actually we're here to save her."

"Save her-Ni?"

"Yeah."

"But, this woman is complete....."

"..... yeah."

"You're gonna get killed-Ni..... it's clear that this woman's magic is greater than yours, master."

"I can see that."

"Is it ok for me to disappear-Ni?"

"You're heartless."

"I can't stick around with someone who doesn't have the will to fight."

On hearing those words, he looked up at the face of the woman who should not be able to see him. At the face that appeared to be happy but yet sad.

What kind of terrible things must have happened to her for her to show such a pained face? He tried to imagine. And as he tried imagining it,

"I don't have the heart to attack her."

He moaned silently. He extinguished the flames of the Tenma Martes Devil in his hand.

Nyankichi then said,

"Then, I shall disappear....."

But, just as the cat said that,

"..... a magic that counteracts me, in that case, what about this?"

The woman said. With that, the arm that was grabbing onto Taito rose up suddenly at a great momentum.

Woahwah! Taito wanted to yell out, but no voice came out from his constricted throat,

"Wah wah wah wah wah."

Nyankichi yelled in his place.

With that, Taito's body crashed into the ceiling. And sank into the ceiling. He could tell that his spine had fractured, but still, the woman pulled him

back downwards, and crashed into the ceiling again. He had probably died twice from that. His organs were smashed and blood spurted out from his mouth. Of course, those wounds started healing.

Then, this time round, she thrust her hand at his organs with her hand.

Piercing through Taito's body which was sunken into the ceiling, the woman's pale, slender hand thrust towards above the ceiling.

And then, she said.

"..... I've passed through the barrier wall..... with this, I can call the spirits....."

She laughed.

Then, she released the neck of Taito and he finally could talk.

"Erm, are you Ela of the East?"

He asked, but she seemed to have not heard it. She was mumbling something softly.

"Hey, erm, it's fine to use your magic but, can you listen to what I have to say? I undertook a request to come here to save you. Even you don't do this, we've prepared an escape route....."

But, in the midst of his sentence, she opened her mouth.

"+ x / ... * + ==========="

She was indeed using the same type of magic used by the Elves, chanting in a high pitched voice that was hard to hear. Horns then appeared from her head. With a splitting sound, six horns appeared. At the tip of those horns, red lizards appeared. And those were not the same small lizards he had seen in the Elf world.

Six lizards which were larger than Taito were born, and *Giiiiiiiiiiiiiiiihhhhhhh*, they howled. From their mouth, balls of fire started forming.

On seeing that,

"..... erm, are you perhaps going to use that to bring down the ceiling? Then, I'll also....."

Before Taito could finish his sentence, the flames she had conjured started burning Taito's body,

"Uwah, it's hottt."

"Well, that's it, I'm leaving."

"Hey, wait....."

But, Nyankichi disappeared right away. Then, losing his power to see into the darkness, the scenery around him disappeared --- that was what he thought but, right now, the gigantic balls of flames she had conjured lit up the room as if it were the middle of the day.

The woman's magic continued. The high-pitched voice went higher and higher, and before long, it reached a frequency which could no longer be heard by humans.

The flames got larger.

The flames got larger.

As the flames continued burning, Taito's body gradually turned to ash. His consciousness disappeared, and returned.

"..... I died once....."

Taito groaned.

Twice from crashing into the ceiling.

Once from the fire.

That makes it three times.

He could only die three more times.

"This is getting really bad....."

He muttered. In the meantime, the flames started burning Taito's body again. There was a possibility that he might die in just a few seconds' time. Then, Taito clenched his fist again. If he were to kill this woman, then Haruka would not be saved.

He had to bring this woman outside.

That was Taito's job, and if so, he could not attack her.

He could not but,

"....."

Taito looked up at the ceiling where his body was sunk into. Even though he didn't know what was beyond this ceiling,

"If I made a hole in this, it would probably please this fellow right? Then."

At that moment, white flames started appearing in his right fist. He clenched his fist tightly, to make his flames larger, and brighter than those coming from the lizards she had conjured.

He then said.

"Then, I shall just make a hole here."

With that, he pulled back his fist. In order to send his flames of the Tenma Martes Devil into the ceiling, he lowered his arm as much as possible.

At that moment,

"What the hell are you trying to do!"

A voice sounded.

He looked in the direction of that voice.

There, was Mirai running towards them at full speed, together with Gekkou who kicked off Mirai's face and jumped towards them.

While jumping off, Gekkou drew the sword at his waist. And he thrust it towards the chest of the Elf woman. But, she moved one of her hands to block it. The sword went through that hand.

And she smiled. Flames spitted out from the lizards resided in that hand. And the flames were about to burst forth towards Gekkou.

But.

"Dispel it, Spell Error Wicked Blade!"

Gekkou yelled. The black blade of the Spell Error Wicked Blade became even blacker and shone. At the same time, it sucked away the flames conjured by the woman.

But, that was the end.

She grabbed hold of the sword. With the palm of her hand, she grasped the sword tightly. Then, three of her other hands aimed at Gekkou. In those three hands, resided the flames spitted out by the lizards.

But, Gekkou did not defend. The woman held on to Spell Error Wicked Blade so tightly that it didn't even bulge, and he scowled.

Taito then said.

"Are you in a pinch? Are you in a pinch?"

"I'm not in a pinch."

"But it's better to save you right? You can't come back to life if you die. Maybe I should prepare my flames of the Tenma Martes Devil....."

"If you strike her with that, she will die."

"No, I was thinking of striking the ceiling. She seems to want to get out of here."

Gekkou then turned his gaze upwards. And then back to Taito,

"That will be the worst choice. The headquarters of the << **Church** >> are above. If you show up above, do you think you can still return alive?"

"Then, what should I....."

But, they didn't have that kind of time to talk.

She was shrieking.

At the same time, she was about to throw her flames.

However, Gekkou did not do anything. He merely,

"Mirai!"

Called out the name of his subordinate.

The lightning girl who were right behind them replied,

"Alroight alroight."

Masses of lightning appeared in both her hands.

"Shock, shock, shock shock ~!"

She yelled. Each time she cried out *shock*, she fired off a mass of lightning from her hand.

Three bouts were aimed at the three hands which were threatening Gekkou.

Another one was aimed at her face.

The bouts of lightning struck her three hands. And seemingly more powerful than expected, the lightning blew off the hands from their base.

"Hey!"

Taito cried out without thinking, but it was too late.

The lightning aimed at the woman's face flew.

The woman tried to avoid the hit by averting her face. However, unable to make it in time, the flesh on her cheek was toasted away.

"Gaah."

She groaned out as she took a step back.

With that, the hand that was piercing through Taito's stomach was withdrawn. He then dropped to the ground,

"Uwah ~, hurts like crazy."

He took a breath.

Himea then caught up from behind. With magic that allowed her to run as fast as if she was also being pulled in the same manner as Taito, she arrived, and stopped just at about the same time as Mirai, behind her.

She came peering into his face.

"Taito, are you ok?"

Taito then waved his hand.

"No problem, but I've died thrice, and can only die another three times."

He spoke in a relatively loud voice to convey his situation to everyone around him.

Once again, he looked in the direction of the woman.

The room was a little dark.

Gekkou and Mirai caused her to use up four of her fireballs, and she had but two of them remaining.

But her arms had returned to normal. The arms that had been blown away by Mirai's lightning had regrown.

Looking intently at that, Gekkou frowned and said.

"Why are we wrestling around with this monster? Did you tell her that we are saving her?"

"Er, seems like I couldn't get through to her in any way....."

Gekkou then turned around,

"Saitohimea. Allow us to understand the Elf language....."

But Taito shook his head.

"That's not it. She's probably been in solitude for too long....."

On hearing those words, Gekkou looked at him. Himea made a sad face. Mirai seemed to not understand a thing.

The woman said.

"..... lightning huh....."

Upon saying that, she dispelled the gigantic red lizards that she had summoned.

Darkness swallowed their surroundings again. Unable to see a thing again, Taito wanted to call out Nyankichi again.

But, before he could do that,

"Patorea."

Said Himea.

While he did not understand what that was about, countless strong, greenish particles of light started dispersing from Himea.

Their field of vision got lit up instantly.

Himea then said.

"..... this light is only visible to those I recognize, and she should still be shrouded in darkness....."

Upon saying that, she looked at the woman,

"But, is she seeing us with her eyes, I wonder?"

She said.

The woman looked at them. With her eyes that were plastered by talismans, she looked at them and smiled in delight. Then,

"Lightning, lightning, lightning, lightning."

After mumbling that a few times, she brought out her hands. And opened her mouth wide.

"+ X / ... * ^^^

Gekkou then looked down at her. He looked at his triumphant looking servant, and made an exasperated face,

"Can you do it?"

"I can!"

"Defending against that amount of lightning?"

"Who do you think I am!?"

"Brat."

"I'll kick your ass!"

"Whatever. If you can deal with it, then do it. But....."

"Don't hurt that witch right? Don't worry don't worry. I'll teach that girl what a fool she is to use lightning before me."

She said.

Her eyes narrowed slightly. A smile surfaced. Having never seen her make a serious face before, the rest were a little surprised.

The usual thirteen, fourteen year old face of Mirai had a slight bewitching feel to it.

She then said.

Holding her right hand out, Mirai said in a slightly lowered voice,

"..... hey thunder birds, who do you think you are aiming at?"

Instantly, the seemingly inanimate thunder birds all turned their attention to Mirai at the same time. Trying to ascertain who had called out to them, they turned to look at Mirai intently.

Those eyes then widened. They widened in fear.

Mirai then said.

"You can see me right? Then, let me ask you again. You lowly beings, what do you think you are about to do the royal blood kin of lightning?"

Just from those words alone, two of the birds disappeared.

The woman became surprised,

"^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^!!"

She chanted in an even louder voice. Apparently getting restrained by the chant, the thunder birds trembled. Lightning started gathering at the tip of their beaks.

Mirai then started,

"Oh ~, you've taken control of the Phaezes' minds with your chant. How powerful. But, however you use the power of lightning....."

At that moment, the woman pointed at Mirai. She shouted something. Lightning then shot out from the beaks of the two of the birds directly towards Mirai ---

"....."

But that did not strike her.

The lightning revolved around her body. The only effect the lightning shockwave had on her, was only a slight flutter of the skirt of her sailor uniform.

The lightning danced around her, as if forming a field around her.

Mirai smiled. Looking intently at the woman,

"Shall I return this to you in multi-fold?"

She held out her right hand. And lightning gathered. And it was a mass many times larger than the lightning launched by the woman.

The woman's face contorted.

It did not seem like she could fend off Mirai's lightning with just the remaining two birds.

As if everything had already ended, Mirai looked in the direction of Gekkou,

"How is it how is it?"

She said.

Gekkou nodded.

"Well done. For a small fry."

"What about my allowance?"

"200 yen."

"Increase that a little!"

"250 yen."

"Yaaaayyyyyyy!"

Taito laughed.

"That's cheap."

Himea made a surprised face on hearing that,

"Eh, cheap? You can buy two bottles of juice with that right?"

This one had no money sense as well. Well, it couldn't be helped since both of them were not humans.

"Don't tell me you've been tricked by Gekkou to work for 250 yen?"

To Taito's question, Himea replied.

"There was once I used my magic for a hundred yen though..... Gekkou told me that it's a luxurious amount that I could use to buy the best juice....."

"Ah, you've treated juice with that money?"

"Yeah."

"But a hundred yen."

"Uh-huh."

"Equates to pocket money for kids....."

"I'll kill him."

Himea really held out her hand and aimed it at Gekkou's back, but was stopped by Taito in a frantic manner.

"Er no, this is not the time for that."

In the meantime while he was fooling around with Himea, Gekkou started negotiations.

"So, you understand the situation now right, Ela of the East?"

But she did not answer. Seemingly lost in thoughts, she looked up, and looked around.

It was not clear whether Gekkou's words had reached her. No, in the first place, could she hear them? With lightning conjured by Mirai, the surroundings were lit up, if she could see, then she would have been able to see them, but her eyes were covered by talismans, and in that case, there was also chance that she might not be able to hear them.

But Gekkou continued.

"We can kill you immediately right now. But we won't. We've come here to save you. Just be obedient and come along with us....."

At that moment, the woman looked up. And she shouted something. Taito had no idea what that was about.

But,

"This is bad."

Said Himea.

Following that, Mirai began,

"This is terrible Gekkou, that girl ordered the Phaezes to break through the ceiling....."

At the moment she said that, lightning was fired from the beaks of the thunder birds. The place where Taito was sunken in was struck by the lightning. A thunderous sound was heard, and the ceiling,

"It's collapsing!!"

Yelled Taito. He grabbed hold of Himea beside him and retreated.

Gekkou said to Mirai,

"Deactivate your lightning mode."

"Alroight."

"Let's retreat."

"Alro..... hey, eh? Eh? Gekkou, why are you grabbing on to me..... eh? Ah, muah ~! Don't use me as a shield!"

While yelling, Gekkou carried Mirai, and used her as a shield to fend off the falling rocks as he retreated back.

Sand dust rose, and in an instant, they could not see a thing in their surroundings. And from somewhere in the heavily obscured room,

"Don't run away!"

Gekkou yelled.

"No way, how can we not run in this situation....."

Said Taito but he couldn't finish. His neck was strangled by something.

Eh?

Taito wanted to utter. But the sound that came from his mouth was,

"..... gaah."

And he looked at his own neck.

The woman's hand had again extended and caught hold of Taito's neck. While he didn't know why she had caught hold of his neck again, but anyway, the grip was a strong one and he was about to be pulled again.

Taito and Himea whom he was carrying exchanged looks. Her beautiful face looked up at him, then looked at the hand that was grabbing his neck,

"Again!"

She said.

Taito made an apologetic face. He tried to tell her, *since you are getting dragged into this if this goes on, I'm going to let go of you*, with his face, but of course, he failed to do so.

So, he tried to push her away from him.

But she grinned. Instead, she clung on to him, with a tight embrace.

"I'm not letting go <3"

She said foolishly.

"Aah, uwah, gaah."

Taito was mad. As a consequence of the strong grip that could have crushed his neck, he couldn't speak a single word.

Himea laughed,

"A date a date ~. To a place without Gekkou and the rest, a date in Italy."

"Gaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah."

At the time he was yelling, they were already moving at a great momentum. With Himea clinging on to him, they were pulled by the witch, towards the opening in the ceiling.

In the midst of it, a thunderous sounded again. It seemed to be the sound of the opening getting bigger, he thought. With that, with a strong momentum, they passed through the hole.

Suddenly, their surroundings became unbelievably bright. It was as if the rays of the sun were shining directly upon them, that was how bright their surroundings were, causing Taito to grimace. To emerge from the darkness into such a brightly lit place made Taito giddy. It was so bright that he couldn't open his eyes. But still, he couldn't afford to keep his eyes closed forever so he opened them slightly. His pupils constricted bit by bit and he gradually got used to it.

Right now, he was really under the sun. Just a while ago, it was night time when he was in the student council room, and right now it was noon at the place he was at.

That's why initially, he thought he must have been sent to another world, but he realized it immediately after.

This was Italy.

There was a time difference.

"Gagagaugagaaga."

This is seriously Italy! Taito yelled. And he looked up. What he saw were the same old blue sky and white clouds. An Rome-like old white church like the one he saw in commercials.

And within that church, where a place resembling a courtyard was, was the large hole from which Taito had been pulled through.

Of course, the one who had pulled him through was the six-arm witch whom he was fighting earlier.

That witch with her smashed eyes and six arms --- looked really out of place in a normal-looking scene of a church and the sun.

The atmosphere felt as if she looked like the only one which could be ejected out of this normal world.

The witch looked around again.

Of course, the surrounding people had noticed her existence. People who were dressed like shepherds and priests.

Huh, do they have shepherds in the Vatican? Priests as well? Well, leaving that aside, in any case, people who were dressed like that were looking at the witch.

"..... what's that?"

The Italians said. Due to the translation magic invoked by Himea, he could understand their words right away.

The priest-like fellows said,

"It's Ela. It's Ela of the East, she has broken her agreement and escaped from her cell!"

"She has hostages with her! Don't attack!"

After hearing that, he finally understood why he was caught again.

Hostages.

Even though they had come to save Ela of the East, why had they become her hostages?

The men who were dressed like priests said.

"Where are you guys from?"

Taito wanted to reply, but he couldn't.

Himea then said,

"We are from the << **Church** >>!"

She made a big lie all of a sudden.

Taito looked at her in surprise, and she returned the look with a mischievous smile.

"It's better to say that right?"

She smiled.

Well, it would indeed be bad if they had said that they were underlings of the << **Military** >> and had come here from the student council room of Miyasaka High, he thought.

A priest then said,

"We'll save y....."

In the midst of saying that, someone from behind said.

"We won't save them. Kill the hostages. We can't let these guys get outside!"

Taito turned to the source of those words. There, was a group of women who were dressed in blue armor and wielding swords.

While he didn't know who those people were, Taito looked in the direction of Himea again.

They say they are going to kill the hostages, he said with his face.

She smiled again.

"I don't know what you are trying to say with your face ~"

That's a given.

"Well, it'll be troublesome even if we get saved, if they know my true identity, the << **Church** >> won't just let me off."

That's another given.

"So, let's save Ela of the East and kick the asses of the fellows from the << **Church** >>, how does that sound?"

Taito frowned. Doesn't sound really really a terrible thing to do?

But, Himea smiled at that,

"Well, if they are humans, no matter their numbers, they won't be a match for me."

Upon saying that, she held out her hand. She pointed her slender fingers towards the women clad in blue armor. And her pink lips separated,

"Ahs Ailed Iyzyldl....."

The words rolled out of her mouth gradually and the rest was lost on him.

However, in the midst of that, the tip of her fingers started to glow slightly. Immediately after that, numerous blue armored women fell at the same time.

The priests became surprised on seeing that.

"W-What did you do to them?"

They yelled.

However, Himea ignored them and tapped on the shoulder of Ela of the East. And showed her what she had done.

"Now, you should be able to see that we're your allies, so can you release Taito? If we want to escape from here, we should combine our powers."

She said.

He didn't really think that those words would get through to her.

However, Ela of the East cocked her head and turned her seemingly blind eyes in the direction of the fallen blue armored women,

"..... << **Church** >>..... << **Church** >>..... I see, you too are toys of the humans huh....."

She looked at Himea.

And released Taito.

For some reason, it seemed like Himea could get through to her.

But Himea smiled again. A mischievous, bewitching smile surfaced,

"You too, you said? Don't insult me. I'm not a second rate witch like you."

Upon saying that, she turned around. She turned to face the soldiers of the << **Church** >>. At that juncture, several times more people had been gathered here.

Blue armored women, and priests.

Even people carrying small arms were gathered here successively.

After Taito verified that his crushed throat had regenerated, he said.

"Isn't this a little bad?"

Himea said readily.

"If you are with me, this level of situations will be plenty."

"Really?"

"Yeah. So get used to it."

"I wonder whether I can."

"It'll be fine. Most of the humans are fragile. That's why I gave you immortality, Taito."

She said. And she raised her hand again. She raised her hand in delight.

Taito looked at her.

"Ah, but Himea, you can't kill them ok?"

"Eh?"

"No, it's troubling when you make a surprised face at that though....."

While they were talking, the soldiers of the << **Church** >> closed in.

Aiming their guns, they started firing all at once,

Aruto
"Restrain!"

Himea chanted.

All the bullets and the soldiers who fired them stopped moving.

Then,

"Then, Taito. Use your flames of the Tenma Martes Devil on them ~"

"Like I said, we aren't going to kill them!"

"If we don't, we'll be killed right?"

"Erm."

"Well, whatever. I'll educate you on that as we go along. Ela, you do it....."

Himea said, though it was not as if she was being given the order, Ela of the East started using her magic. Her six horns glowed, and once again, the fire lizards appeared.

The six lizards were even larger than before. Balls of fire appeared from the mouths of those lizards, and the soldiers of the << **Church** >> trembled on seeing that.

"..... it's futile..... we can't fight against Ela of the East....."

"We're going to die."

"Contact the Ophius....."

"We already did!"

"Then why aren't they here yet!"

"Anyway, let's retreat for now. We can't do anything about it until the main force arrives....."

At that moment, the fireballs were already unleashed. The soldiers managed to dodge them but, the target of Ela of the East was not them.

It was the church.

The huge towering building before them were struck by the six fireballs and exploded.

The church promptly disappeared.

It was a tremendous amount of destructive power.

If we want to compare the destructive power of the fireballs, it was way larger than the flames of the Tenma Martes Devil.

If one receives that, it won't be enough no matter how lives one has.

Of course, the soldiers of the << **Church** >> were driven into a panic on seeing that.

Trembling in fear, like the hatchlings of a spider, they scattered as they tried to escape.

Himea then said,

"Oh my, what a pity..... didn't manage to lift a hand."

Taito replied,

"I don't want to fight so it's great for me..... wait, aren't there people in that building?"

"Probably."

"Uwuu..... er, if they aren't anyone worshiping inside, it'll be a good thing though."

On hearing his words, Himea had an incredulous look.

"Humans die everyday, but yet, you are worried about people you have never met, Taito?"

"Well, erm, of course I am, I guess?"

"I see. Taito, you are really really kind."

"Isn't that normal?"

"It isn't normal."

"It is normal. Wait, it's not normal? I think Japanese are all like that though."

She didn't seem to agree with it. She thought about it for a while, with a look of incomprehension, and then turned to him again,

"But, really, you can't worry about others except for me <3."

"Eh ~"

"Joking ~. I love the way you are, Taito."

"Well, it's a little out of place to confess to me all of a sudden....."

At the time he said that, Ela of the East started running. She ran towards the place where the church was, where there was nothing now. It seemed like the church was built on the mountainside of some place, and after the church was gone, on the other side were tall trees in luxuriant growth.

Taito looked at them and thought.

It was fortunate that this wasn't a city area. If a monster was roaming around the city area of Italy, then it would be terrible if it became a police issue.

No, well, even if the police were to come now, they wouldn't be able to do a thing about it.

Looking intently at the running figure of Ela of the East,

"Let's get out of here as well, shall we?"

Taito asked to which Himea nodded.

"Of course. More powerful << **Church** >> pursuers will definitely arrive soon."

"Will they be terribly powerful?"

"If they are anti-witch troops it won't be a problem. But if they are ANTI Vampire << Most Ancient Sorcerer >> troops then....."

"Bad?"

"Yeah. I'll run if I see them."

"Then let's get out of here. Since we have already freed Ela of the East from the << **Church's** >> prison, our job is already done anyway. Let's get back to the student council room through the portal....."

Taito turned around. And looked through the hole they came through.

Then, he said.

"It's buried!?"

"Well, with that kind of flashy magic, it's no wonder it collapsed."

"Hey, this is not the time be so easygoing right? Wait, even though I said that, I just realized I could open up the hole with my flames of the Tenma Martes Devil."

"Yeah yeah. Taito is so smart."

"Did you just make fun of me?"

"Ah-haha."

Himea laughed. She laughed with a really beautiful face. And that laugh suddenly disappeared from her face. She looked up at the sky,

"Ah ~, seems like we can't do that."

She said.

"They've already come."

"What came?"

"ANTI- V a m p i r e
<< Most Ancient Sorcerer >> troops."

"Are you kidding me? Where?"

He asked, and she pointed at the sky.

"As expected of Italy. They move fast."

Taito looked up at the sky and saw helicopters flying.

More than ten of them.

When normal choppers fly by, they will be so noisy that they will block out the sound coming from the TV, but right now, for some reason, they did not seem to be making any noise.

However, there was no doubt that more than ten choppers were heading their way.

Among them, one of them fired something that looked like a missile.

Then again, that thing probably wasn't something that looked like a missile but,

"It's a missile right?"

When Taito said that, it was flying straight at them.

"And it's coming our way! Uwah uwah, what should we do?"

"We have to run!"

"Yeah! Erm, then let's go after Ela....."

At the time he said that, an explosion could be heard from the direction where Ela had run to.

A chopper fell, and the rest of the choppers started firing their guns in that direction. It was something that could only be seen in movies, *rat-tat-tat-tat rat-tat-tat-tat*, the sounds of gatling guns firing.

"Thinking again, we should run to a different place from Ela!"

Said Taito. He then grasped Himea's hand. Pulling her along, he started running.

Himea then started,

"Ah, somehow."

Taito replied without turning around,

"What is it?"

He asked to which she said.

"Somehow, this really makes me happy."

"No, this isn't the time....."

At the moment he said that, the place where Taito and Himea had been was struck by the missle, and the shockwave from that fell the surrounding trees. Of course, Taito was blown away as well, Himea then rode on the gust from the blast and landed close to him.

She then helped Taito up,

"But don't worry. Even though I know not how much more advanced they have become during the nine years I was imprisoned, as long as they keep to using modern weapons, they will not be able to catch me nor Ela."

"No, just now, I died once though....."

"How many more times can you die?"

"Probably two more times."

"I see. Then, we better hurry up. If we tarry too much, the Mercenaries of Ancient Times from Switzerland will arrive."

O p h i u s

"Switzerland?"

"Yeah."

"But this is Italy right? Why from Switzerland?"

"Don't worry about the details, anyway, let's just get out of here. The other side probably hasn't noticed our presence yet, if Ela goes on a rampage, we'll be able to get away."

In response to those words, Taito turned around. As earlier, away from them, he could hear the sounds of bombing, guns, and exploding choppers.

Ela was fighting.

Taito became worried,

"Will it be fine?"

He said.

Himea then looked at him,

"Now, who are you worried about? The humans? Or the witch?"

After getting asked that, Taito became incredulous himself.

Earlier, he was worried about the humans, now, he was worried about Ela of the East.

He could only smile wryly at his own indecisiveness and uncertainty without replying. Himea would definitely be utterly amazed if he said the was worried about both sides.

So Taito said,

"Anyway, let's just run....."

At the moment he said that, another anomaly occurred. A thunderous sound that seemed to shake the ground reverberated, and the sky was stained red.

While running, Taito turned to look.

He looked in the direction where Ela had run to.

The group of choppers that appeared to fill the sky exploded one after another. Fragments scattered, and those fragments struck a neighboring chopper, which triggered another explosion.

"Oh my."

Taito's legs stopped.

"Could that be the deed of Ela?"

He murmured.

But Himea shook her head.

"No."

"No?"

"Uh huh. I can no longer feel the power of Ela."

On hearing those words,

"Eh?"

Taito made a stupid utterance without thinking.

"You can't feel her power you said, that means....."

But, without finishing what she said, Himea started running again. She pulled Taito along with her slender hand.

"They came faster than I thought..... let's run, Taito. The Ophius Mercenaries of Ancient Times must have arrived."

On hearing those words, Taito recalled her earlier words.

"If we tarry too much, the Ophius Mercenaries of Ancient Times from Switzerland will arrive."

She had said.

Even though he didn't know who the Ophius was and why they had come to Italy from Switzerland, he could tell that they were dangerous from the fear exhibited by the Vampire << Most Ancient Sorcerer >> Himea.

But, he had doubts. If the Ophius had arrived, why would they destroy their comrades' choppers.

He didn't understand.

Even though he didn't understand, at any rate, there was no doubt that a lot of things were becoming grim and he started running. While running, he asked.

"So is Ela captured?"

At his question, she said while frowning.

"She might already be dead."

"Are you kidding?"

"No."

"Then, what about Haruka....."

Taito's words stopped for an instant as he started. He was not sure whether it would be a good thing to talk about Haruka in front of Himea. But, since this was not the time to hesitate, he continued.

"If Ela died, then doesn't that mean Haruka won't get released?"

He asked,

"....."

But Himea did not reply.

However, Taito continued.

"Then, then, let's go save Ela....."

"You can't do that."

"But."

"We'll definitely be killed if we go. With my current powers, fighting the O p h i u s
Mercenaries of Ancient Times is like hitting a rock with an egg. We'll get killed together as well. At any rate, we have to get out of here now. We have to run, get back to the student council room, and come up with a counter strategy with Gekkou."

Said Himea.

Taito grimaced at that.

The situation was the worst possible one.

The original plan was to rescue Ela of the East and bring her along with them back to the student council room. However, the plan had barely reached the 'rescue' part when everything became messed up.

Ela of the East might have been caught by the << **Church** >> again, or killed.

The troops from the << **Church** >> which Himea was so aftaid of were here.

And this place was in the mountains of Italy.

And only the two of them were here at the stronghold of the << **Church** >>.

That was an extraordinary bad situation.

If they were attacked here, Taito would definitely be unable to protect her. She would then get caught again. No, this time, even Taito would be captured as well. And then, like the Ela of the East which they saw, they would undergo nauseating, terrible experiments again and again.

If they run, they wouldn't be able to save Haruka.

Whichever he chose, the results would be unpleasant.

"Damn."

Taito groaned.

And he ran.

He could not save Haruka

But even because of that, he could not afford not escape. If he dies, then everything will end. Perhaps, if there's another way to save Haruka, and if he dies, then everything will end. Therefore, he had to survive. He had to do his utmost to survive. So,

"Himea."

Said Taito.

"Uhn?"

"Himea, do you know where we are right now?"

"Nope. But we are probably in the premises of the << **Church** >>. I can feel magic coming from various places.

"Hm. In other words, we are surrounded by enemies?"

"Yeah. But, there are hardly any troops who can kill Ela. The only ones I fear are the Ophius Mercenaries of Ancient Times....."

But her words ended there.

A red light was shot at them from behind and Taito's right arm was blown away. It spun in the air and fell onto the ground.

Taito looked at that.

Following that, he released his left hand that was gripping Himea's hand. And picked up the arm on the ground. Reattached it to his body. Immediately, his arm was reconnected to his body.

Then,

"..... are we found!?"

By the time Taito said that, Himea had already turned around, and had started chanting some incantation. She thrust both her hands forward,

"Asuka, Himie, Maruku, Maruku."

She said. Her chant sounded like Japanese but yet was different, and completely incomprehensible to Taito.

Following that, her red bewitching eyes glowed. A half transparent curtain-like thing appeared before her hands."

"This should buy us some time."

She said.

What's that? But he didn't ask. She probably used a magic that would slow the enemy down.

Since they had been discovered, there was no need to hide her magic anymore.

She then turned towards Taito and said,

"Let's get out of here!"

"If we just keep on running, things will definitely work out somehow."

Upon saying that, just as he was about to start running, the cellphone in his pocket started vibrating.

Taito looked down, and took out his cellphone from his pocket. It was the cellphone that was rigged to prevent tapping, the one he had received from Gekkou.

"It's from Gekkou."

When Taito said that, Himea's legs stopped. And looked at him.

"Is he going to open a << **Way** >> to us?"

Without answering to those words, Taito took the call. Himea grabbed his shoulder.

"While talking....."

"Ah, we run at the same time."

"Uhn."

And the two of them started running.

While running, Taito put his cellphone to his ear,

"Yes."

He said.

And from the other side of the phone,

"It's me."

The same old voice.

"I know."

"Tell me your situation. The hole in the ceiling has been covered, and I can't get to you."

"We are being attacked by the fellows of the << **Church** >>. According to Himea, it's the Ophius."

"..... Mercenaries of Ancient Times huh. You guys are dead."

"Save us duh!"

*"That's my intention. But I can't afford to have the << **Church** >> see a << **Way** >> opening from the student council room. Hide from the eyes of the enemy. And then speak your coordinates."*

On hearing those words, Taito turned around. He verified that the enemies were not in visible range yet,

"Right now! Open one now! No one's watching us now!"

"Then tell me your coordinates."

"Coordinates? Coordinates you say..... how can I tell what they are?"

"Useless trash."

"Even if you tell me that, I don't know how, it can't be helped right!"

While he was yelling that, Himea's legs stopped. She put her hand against the ground. Then looked up,

"The coordinates are....."

Just at the moment she said that, from the other side of the line,

"Huh what!?"

Gekkou said with a surprised voice.

Following that,

"Wait....."

Immediately after that,

"Tsuuh, tsuuh, tsuuh."

The line was cut.

Taito then took the phone away from his ear and stared at it,

"Eh? Why? Why was it cut?"

He muttered, dumbfounded.

He then went to his address book's 'I' entry and pressed on the entry, "Irritating Kurenai Gekkou". The phone then started connecting,

"The number you are trying to call is either out of range or is not turned on....."

"Heeeyyy, what the heellll is with youuuuuuuu!"

Taito hollered without thinking.

Himea looked up at him,

"What happened?"

"The line was cut. And I can't seem to call back."

"You're kidding."

"Really."

"Then."

Then, what shall we do, just when the two of them exchanged such a look.

A voice sounded.

"We've finally caught up with you."

A man's voice.

It probably belong to the monster group called Ophius which Himea was afraid of.

On hearing that,

"....."

Taito turned around, with his face scowling.

♦

♦

♦

Let's turn the time back a little.

In the prison where Ela of the East was held.

After the ceiling which Ela used to break out of prison got covered, Gekkou and Mira were at a loss.

Should I get Mirai to blast another hole and go after them? But he dismissed that idea.

Having infiltrated the stronghold of the << **Church** >> without going through any formalities was just asking for them to be killed.

Then, it would be better to return to the student council room, to verify the situation with Kurogane and the rest, and open a << **Way** >> to them, he assessed.

So Gekkou said to Mirai,

"..... let's return to the student council room."

By the way, right now, it was Mirai's lightning that was illuminating the dark place without any other light source.

Sparks of lightning gathered at the tip of a bundle of her hair and acted as a light source like a torch.

Well, that isn't something important.

Mirai then said.

"Then what about Hime-chan and the rest?"

"We will rescue them via a << **Way** >> from the student council room."

"Horh horh."

"Even if we go after them right now, they may not be above there anymore."

"Huhm huhm."

"Besides, Saitohimea is with them. She probably won't die that easily. Anyway, let's go back. Become a horse."

"Eh ~, again ~?"

"Don't grumble."

"Uwu ~."

He pulled on the hair of Mirai, who was making a displeased face, and rode on her back. It wasn't really something cool looking and he didn't really like it in particular, but well, it could not be helped.

"Now, run, Silver."

"What's Silver?"

"I don't know. The name of some old horse, it seems."

"Heehh. Sounds like an awesome horse."

"Yeah. Sounds awesome. So don't lose to it and run hard."

"Alroight."

She started running. With a speed unmatched by humans. No, she was running even faster than a horse.

Her fast running speed, and also the large amount of lightning flashes she released against Ela of the East earlier, displaying all the power she had in her control, made him changed his opinion of her a little. This fool was a lot more capable than he thought.

"....."

Of course, he wouldn't say that to her.

Gekkou looked at the Mirai who was running with all her might for a while and then turn his thoughts to another thing.

About the matter this time.

Even thought they had freed Ela of the East, the way things happened made it unlikely for them to rescue her, he thought.

The place above was probably right in the middle of the << **Church's** >> stronghold. No matter how he thought about it, it seemed quite impossible to get a witch out of that place.

No matter how much power Ela of the East held, it was probably impossible for her.

Then Shigure Haruka,

"..... will be killed?"

He murmured.

His eyes narrowed, and his thoughts moved ahead.

Even if she were killed, she wasn't really that important a victim. Kurogane Taito's mental state would probably suffer greatly, but it was of no concern to Gekkou.

In whatever kind of world, people die. As long as Kurogane Taito stayed in this student council, he would experience the deaths of people over and over again.

The only thing was that, that person was his childhood friend.

It wasn't really something new.

But, even so.

"....."

Even so, he did want to save her, even if it's a small want. Why he felt that way, he wasn't sure himself. A little while ago, he could only think about killing Hinata and nothing else, but recently, he started to think about unnecessary things.

And one of these was this.

It was not like there was any benefit to him in saving Shigure Haruka, but yet, why was he spending so much effort, furiously trying to save her?

"..... jeez, I'm like a fool."

He muttered.

Following that, he took out his cellphone. He started calling that moron who had went flying into the middle of the << **Church** >>.

A useless small fry like him, who was even lesser than a baby, would die readily if he didn't lend him a hand.

He made a exasperated face, scrolled to 'I' row in his cellphone address book, and dialed the "Idiot" entry. About four rings later, that idiot answered.

"Yes."

"It's me."

"I know."

"Tell me your situation. The hole in the ceiling has been covered, and I can't get to you."

*"We are being attacked by the fellows of the << **Church** >>. According to Himea, it's the Ophius."*

Words from an idiot, just as he expected. He would never expect him to say things like, *Even though we flew out into the stronghold of the << **Church** >>, since we are capable, we'll be coming back without anyone the wiser!*.

A useless fellow had drawn the worst possible development towards him.

Worse than that, they had been found by the O p h i u s Mercenaries of Ancient Times.

"You guys are dead."

Gekkou said.

The fool then yelled.

"Save us duh!"

"That's my intention. But I can't afford to have the << **Church** >> see a << **Way** >> opening from the student council room. Hide from the eyes of the enemy. And then speak your coordinates."

Kurogane then appeared to be checking his surroundings from the fumbling sounds.

At the same time, his horse said,

"We are arriving at the student council room soon~."

To which he pointed to the rift to order her to enter it.

"Alroight alroight."

Mirai said and she sped up.

Following that, from the other side of the phone,

"Right now! Open one now! No one's watching us now!"

What an idiot to yell like that, he then told him to tell him his coordinates so that he could open a << **Way** >> to them.

Taito then said.

"Coordinates? Coordinates you say..... how can I tell what they are?"

"Useless trash."

"Even if you tell me that, I don't know how, it can't be helped right!"

Kurogane yelled.

Well, since Saitohimea probably know the method, he would know the coordinates in a moment.

Meanwhile, they were getting closer and closer to the dimensional rift opening up into the student council room.

It was right in front of them.

Once they reached it, he would open a << **Way** >> to the << **Church** >>. Then, he would rescue the idiots, and think about what to do next.

Should they go back to rescue Ela of the East?

Or perhaps, at the time when Ela of the East broke free of her prison, the kidnappers might have fulfilled their promise and released Shigure Haruka.

The latter would be good, while the former would be a bother.

Even the O p h i u s **Mercenaries of Ancient Times** who was supposed to protect the Pope from the world's organizations had been deployed, it just meant that in future, it could lead to an all-out battle with the << **Church** >>.

Well, whichever way it was, right now, the only thing he could do was ---

At that moment, as he thought, instead of the idiot, he could hear Saitohimea's voice.

"The coordinates are....."

She started.

At that moment, Mirai jumped into the student council room.

But, there was a silhouette of a person in the student council room.

In fact, there were two of them.

One of them was the man he just met earlier today in the afternoon.

Black suit and red tie. With a hat, round glasses, and gloves.

The supervisor sent by the << **Military** >> by the name of Kurosu Philier Yuuichi.

But, his figure did not really surprise Gekkou. Kurosu was dispatched here for the sake of supervising the student council, and the barrier of the student council room had been broken.

On top of that, the order given by this supervisor, was only to stay out of the matter concerning Shigure Haruka and the Elves, and he had said nothing about not lifting a hand to save the imprisoned Ela of the East from the << **Church** >>.

Of course, to go and square off with the << **Church** >> without getting permission of the << **Military** >> could be a taboo among taboos, but still he could assert that they did not break any orders.

That's why, Gekkou wasn't too surprised at seeing Kurosu.

But, the figure of the other person.

On seeing the figure of the girl with Kurosu, without thinking,

"Hn-wha!?"

Gekkou made a sound that appeared to be something only a small fry would make.

And he looked at the girl.

She had lost consciousness and Kurosu was carrying her.

With beautiful black medium-length hair, and a gentle-looking face. Her slender body was clad in the sailor uniform of Miyasaka High.

The person there was Shigure Haruka.

Shigure Haruka, whom Gekkou and the rest were desperately trying to save now, was right there.

Gekkou then appeared to want to say something. Opening his mouth, seemingly wanting to say something, but Kurosu said before him,

"..... maybe I should smash that phone which is connected to the Church first."

Then, he drew out a slender knife that resembled a surgical knife used by doctors in surgeries. And threw it. Gekkou couldn't react. The only thing he could say was,

"Wait....."

The knife pierced through the phone he held. The knife made a small explosion.

"Guah."

Gekkou's body was sent flying to the side, and fell off from Mirai.

"Gekkou!?"

Mirai cried out but, he could only hear her with his left ear. The explosion just now affected his right ear. It would probably take some time to recover.

But he wasn't concerned with that. He got back to his feet and glared at beyond the dimensional rift.

Kurosu looked down at him from there, and smiled in delight.

"You sure did something really willful back there."

On hearing that, putting up a bluff, a smile surfaced on Gekkou's lips,

"We didn't disobey any orders."

"Hahaha."

"So you shouldn't have any problem right?"

"None."

"Then why did you laugh?"

"Because you are such a funny guy."

"What did you say?"

"The mobile which was just destroyed. We could hear what's going on through that."

Kurosu said.

Gekkou's expression changed. If that was the case, it meant that he was well aware of everything they had done.

Attempting to disobey their orders and going to the Elf world.

As well as Kurogane and Saitohimea being pursued by the Ophius Mercenaries of Ancient Times within the premises of the << **Church** >>.

"....."

No, if he had just bugged their phones, then he should only knew up to that. He should not know of how they had accepted a request from the half-breeds who suddenly appeared, to go to the << **Church** >> instead of going to the Elf world, and why they were at the << **Church** >> right now.

But, seeing that Kurosu had retrieved Shigure Haruka,

"....."

Did those half-breeds get themselves killed by Kurosu?

He already knew that this fellow had enough power to do just that. When he met him in the afternoon, Gekkou couldn't do a thing to him and only kept getting beaten up.

Just Taijutsu alone, the disparity was already so great, if this person had also been a former student council president before, then, his magic would probably be at a high level.

His knowledge in magic should also be immense.

In any case, he could not understand the situation that was happening right now.

Why did Kurosu come to the student council room, and how did he save Shigure Haruka?

Then, Kurosu said. As if to answer Gekkou's unspoken questions,

"She was released all of a sudden. Immediately after you all infiltrated the territory of the << **Church** >>, she appeared in the Kingdom of Folheim."

On hearing those words, Gekkou looked at Kurosu intently,

"From the way you are speaking, you....."

"Yes. I was in the Kingdom of Folheim."

"Did you go there to get back Shigure Haruka?"

Kurosu then smiled at that,

"No way. I went there to tease the Elves a little so that they don't start getting impudent. I took the head of the king."

He said.

Taking the head of the king of Elves in the country of Elves, this man said that easily. He then reached into his pocket and took out a glove stained in red. He then opened it up and swung it before him, and throw it at his feet.

He continued.

"He kept lying to me. I killed him to make an example out of him. So, Kurenai-kun. Are you also lying to me?

"....."

"The masterminds behind this affair are not the Elves. They were just being used. And you all are also being used. In the instant you all went to the << **Church** >> to rescue Ela of the East, the perpetrators were found. They are the kids of Ela of the East, you know? They are the Spell Breakers who have been selling their services recently. You guys are just being used by those small fries."

"....."

"I'm really amazed. Can you don't disgrace too much the name of the student council president of Miyasaka High? To be played around by those low life half-breeds, you should be ashamed of yourself. Even though you should know that the << **Military** >> doesn't like owing a debt to the << **Church** >>."

"....."

"So, I guess this is the start of your education. You are actually kinder than I thought. Needlessly kind. You must have been brought up in a lukewarm, peaceful world huh. As a result of having too many important things, you forgot the bigger picture. Anyway, in order to educate you, for now, I shall just take your friends away from you."

"....."

"In other words, I've given Kurogane Taito and Saitohimea to the << **Church** >>."

Kurosu said. His gentle looking eyes beneath those glasses smiled.

"The << **Church** >> is happy, you know. Since a long time ago, they have been having an attachment to Saitohimea, you see."

On hearing those words, Gekkou said in a soft voice,

"..... Mirai."

She then turned towards him.

"What's with that annoying fella?"

He ignored her question and continued.

"Do you have the phone which I handed to you?"

Immediately following that.

Even though he should have been speaking in a voice soft that Kurosu shouldn't have been able to hear, the man in suit replied.

"If you are talking about the phone of that lass, it's in the student council room. Seems like she has forgotten it."

"....."

"And also, I've said this earlier, but please take more care in avoiding your information from getting leaked. If you think that just by lowering your voice, the enemy wouldn't be able to hear you, then, you are just a useless fool. I'm a practitioner of magic, and so are you. This is such a world right?"

"....."

"Now, shall we begin? Will you be able to get hold of the phone behind me and get the coordinates of Kurogane-kun and Saito-kun, or....."

"....."

"Or you can't get past me and your friends will get taken by the << **Church** >>? I think the result will be the later though."

"....."

"Whichever it is, it's your responsibility. Everything lies with how you decide. That's what it means to be a student council president."

On hearing those words, Gekkou said as he glared at Kurosu. He put his hand to the sword at his waist,

"I'll kill you this time."

Kurosu then nodded.

"If you can do that, you will be awarded a hundred points by the << **Military** >>. But, if you are just going to use magic, your chances of winning will be even lower than this afternoon, you know?"

"I'll kill you."

"Then do it. To be able to witness the true powers of my student, as your teacher, I'm really looking forward to it."

Upon saying that, Kurosu laid down Shigure Haruka on the floor. He pulled on his gloves as if to even out the wrinkles.

"Now, come at me."

Upon saying that, Gekkou drew his sword. And ordered Mirai.

"Mirai, this fellow is stronger than me. Act with the intent to kill."

His voice was no longer soft. To be precise, he didn't know of any magic which could conceal his voice from this man called Kurosu.

If Saitohimea were here, the situation might have been a little different, but because he had made a mistake in deployment, she ended up at Ela of the East's side.

Indeed, like what Kurosu said, I might just be an idiot,

"....."

Gekkou thought.

All the responsibility and outcome falls on the shoulders of the president. Then, the fact that right now, Kurogane and Saitohimea were caught in the dangerous situation with the << **Church** >>, as well as him failing to deceive Kurosu, and perhaps even the matter of Shigure Haruka getting abducted, were all his responsibility.

The rest of the humans are useless.

Then, as a genius, he should be manage them properly, but yet, he was negligent.

That's why he accepted it this time.

That he was a fool.

And now, things would be different.

Upon saying that, he withdrew his sword. Then, with a speed many times faster than just now, he brought his sword down on Kurosu's head.

But.

"..... but, as expected, the fool is always you. Since you have a demon as your ally, there's no way I won't use my magic."

On saying that, he opened his fist. Inside it was a small light. It then sprung out with a 'bachin' sound. Then, a strange stench went into Gekkou's nose. In an instant, his senses became strange. The vision before him became dark, and he could no longer move his arms anymore.

Of course, to humans, unlike << Vampire Most Ancient Sorcerer >>, there were not very much magic they could invoke without incantations or some kind of preparation, but, it was really in a mere instant, that Gekkou could do nothing but eat that attack.

But that was more than enough.

Kurosu took out a knife from his bosom. And struck it against Gekkou's neck. Without slicing him, he merely tapped the body of the knife against him. With a chill, he felt the cold blade against his throat.

"You've died once."

Following that, he pressed it against his side.

"You've died twice."

The next was his wrist.

"Three times."

And he simulate killing him many, many times. The truth was, if Kurosu had wanted, Gekkou would have died by his hands a long time ago. Even though his body couldn't move, his consciousness returned. Having his consciousness returned, as he watched how much of a fool he had been made of, and how he kept losing before his subordinate, it reached a point which was no longer tolerable.

Lastly, just as Kurosu was about to pretend to stab him in his solar plexus, Mirai grabbed his hand from the side.

"Don't bully Gekouuuuuuuu!"

She grabbed him tightly. Then, with a crackling sound, a snapping sound came from Kurosu's arm.

Moreover, Gekkou's senses returned to his body and he readied his sword. Glaring up at Kurosu, he got ready to thrust at him.

Even though Kurosu had his arm broken, he still looked calmly down at him.

And he said.

"..... you still can't understand the difference between our strengths from this? Then, I'm going to get a little serious you know? If I do that, you might just lose your comrade before you. Not somewhere distant, but right now, you are going to lose a comrade before your very eyes. Well, I think that's part of education, so it's not a bad idea....."

Kurosu then averted his eyes from Gekkou. As if Gekkou's presence did not matter at all, he averted his eyes.

And he turned his eyes to Mirai. With a gentle, delightful look. Grinning,

"So die, demon."

Just as Kurosu said that.

"Wait."

Gekkou said.

"Please wait."

He said.

Kurosu then turned back to him again. Grinning broadly, Kurosu said.

"..... wait? For what?"

On hearing that question, Gekkou grimaced. His whole body trembling, he gritted his teeth.

But he knew that if he didn't say it clearly, things might become irreversible. The difference in their strengths was too great. The difference was too great for even luck or fortune to compensate for it.

That's why he said.

"..... I get it..... it's my loss..... so for Mirai....."

"Uhn."

"Don't kill her."

He said.

Mirai then said,

"You got to be kidding, you got to be kidding, Gekkou!?"

She hollered.

"W-we can win! This guy's arm's already broken, if we rush him together, we can win!"

She said.

But Gekkou did not listen to her. No, rather, he couldn't even look at how her face looked like right now.

But he knew that, if he didn't withdraw from here, in order to make a demonstration, this fella would kill Mirai.

In order to let him taste complete defeat.

In order to teach him how useless he was.

This fella would kill Mirai without a blink.

And he couldn't afford to have that happen.

That's why Gekkou said.

"What should I do? What should I do to end this fight.....?"

Kurosu then said.

"Throw down your sword, and kneel before me."

Mirai then started,

"W-wait a minute. Don't shit with me! Gekkou, there's no need for you to do that! I'll just beat the crap out of this guy....."

But, in the midst of her words, Gekkou threw down his sword onto the floor. And his knees bent.

Mirai then said,

"No way!?"

"Not for me..... I don't want you to do that for me!?"

She hollered.

But Gekkou did not listen to her. With his knees on the ground, he said.

"..... is this ok?"

"Yup. That's good. With this, you just might become stronger."

"..... then."

Gekkou said.

"Then, end this. Kurogane and Saitohimea as well."

"Aah, that won't do. I've received payment from the << **Church** >>, you see."

"Damn you!?"

"Don't look up, brat. I'll kill this girl you know?"

"....."

"Well ~, it's sad that you don't have enough power right? If you are feeling mortified, just acquire the power to kill me. That'll be your goal for now."

"....."

"Well then, the lesson has ended for today. I'm confiscating your phones. Forget about Kurogane-kun and Saitohimea. I'll return Shigure Haruka to the class. Oh yeah, I forgot to tell you this, but did you know that Shigure Haruka is with the enemies of Saitohimea?"

"....."

"I'm telling you that you are just a fumbling president who knows about nothing. You are a fool to think of risking your life to go save a traitor. If you just use your brains a little more, things might have been different. Get it?"

"....."

"Well, so the lesson has ended. You can go back and get some sleep. If you don't get your sleep, you can't grow taller you know?"

As he said that, Kurosu turned on his heel. And he passed through the dimensional rift, went into the student council room, and further went on to leave the student council room.

During then, Gekkou could only look down, unable to move.

He was angry at himself for being a powerless fool, and did not have the energy to stand up.

Then,

"..... Gekkou."

Said Mirai. In a trembling voice. She was clearly trembling. That fool seemed to be crying.

He then looked up. Mirai sniffed, with her face covered in tears.

The crybaby Mirai then clung to his chest and said 'sorry'. I'm sorry for being weak, she kept saying.

That's why this fella is an idiot, Gekkou thought.

It's me who's weak. There's no need for you to apologize, he thought.

That's why.

"....."

Without saying anything, he continued to look at the student council room for a while.

At the strange place governed by the << **Military** >>, an organization which even he did not understand completely.

Looking intently at that.

"....."

His mind spun, thinking.

Searching for a way to escape the clutches of the << **Military** >> and Kurosu, and to save Kurogane and Saitohimea.

A way to save those idiots.

"....."

But no matter how hard he tried, he could not find one.

♦
♦
♦

The death god was almost upon them.

Inside the forest full of dense and luxuriant growth of trees.

Escaping the magic Himea had deployed which should have slowed them down, a voice called out from behind them.

"Yaaahh, we've caught up."

A man's voice.

It was apparently a soft, courteous voice.

But right now, the ones who had caught up should be the monster group called Ophius which even Himea was fearful of. They were probably here to capture Himea and Taito.

Capture them, then experiment on them, and finally kill them.

What awaited them was probably a fate which was worse than the worst fate to an ordinary high school student.

In other words, their situation right now was,

"..... terribly bad."

Moaned Taito.

Following that, he turned around.

And looked behind him.

There, stood two men.

Taito became surprised on seeing them. Himea had termed the Ophius to be powerful troops from Switzerland, so he thought there would be numerous armed soldiers pursuing them from behind.

Fearsome armed troops who can use magic.

But, right there, stood two men with beautiful faces.

One of them had golden hair and gentle dark blue eyes. With well arranged features like those of an Elf, he looked at Taito with a kind, grinning face.

As for the other one.....

At that moment,

"..... hey wait, aren't..... you guys the ones who abducted Haruka?"

He said.

He then took a hard look at his face. Deep blue hair, golden eyes. Just like the man standing beside him, he had the face with well arranged features like those of an Elf, and a piercing gaze.

It was the half-breed who had infiltrated the student council room earlier and had told them that they would release Haruka if they rescue Ela of the East.

But, as to why he was here, Taito didn't have a clue.

No, these guys,

"Are you guys the Ophius?"

Taito asked, to which Himea, who was beside him, shook her head.

"Half-breeds can't become Ophius Mercenaries of Ancient Times."

In response to those words, the one with the golden hair and kindly face said.

"That's right ~. When I was a kid, I've dreamed about becoming an Ophius Mercenaries of Ancient Times, but I was told that half-breeds aren't allowed to and I was really at a loss ~."

On hearing those words, the man beside him, with the dark blue hair and a stern-looking face, said,

"Huh? What are you cooking up out of the blue?"

"Eh? I thought it's easier for them to open their hearts to us if I match their topic."

"We don't need that from them."

"But it'll get the beautiful girl to go *Uhn uhn* in agreement you know?"

"Shut up, idiot big brother."

"Ah-haha. You like to say that even when you love me so much."

"Hey, whatever, just shut up. All the tension is lost whenever you start talking, Serge"

"Really? Well then, I'll shut up. I don't want to make you mad with all my talking, Hasga."

Upon saying that, the golden-hair man called Serge shrugged his shoulders, and put his finger to his tip as if to signify that he was going to keep quiet.

The fiercer-looking younger brother called Hasga then nodded,

"Well, and so, to begin, we are not the Ophius Mercenaries of Ancient Times, so rest easy."

Even having being told that, Taito glowered at the two of them,

"As if I can rest easy when it's the kidnappers who are telling me that."

"You don't trust us?"

"Are you kidding me?"

"Hell yeah. But, we are thankful to you. After all, you did manage to free Ela of the East."

On saying that, Serge nodded *uhn uhn* as well.

"Since we can't get close to the center of the << **Church** >>. You really helped us by getting her outside."

On hearing that, Himea said.

"So, did you guys kill Ela of the East?"

The two half-breeds then looked at her. One of them glared at Himea piercingly while the other smiled kindly.

Even though their faces looked alike, their personalities were really complete opposites.

"..... we didn't kill....."

But, Himea interrupted.

"Liar. Her magical presence had completely disappeared. You guys killed her....."

But, before she could finish, she stopped. As if to ascertain something, she stared at the two half-breed men.

Then,

"Aah, I see."

She said.

"Why haven't I noticed? You guys are the children of the Ela of the East huh? Even though it's a little faint, I can feel the same type of magical power from you."

"....."

But, the two of them did not reply.

"Which means regarding the intelligence where Ela of the East went mad and was annihilated..... was referring to her madness in giving birth to half-breed children right?"

"....."

"So, Ela of the East was sold to the << **Church** >>. The fact that she didn't kill herself when she was taken captive was perhaps because her children were taken hostage?"

"....."

"That's definitely it. You guys did say that your names were layered with a curse that prevents you from getting close to the << **Church** >>. For the sake of protecting you, Ela of the East....."

At that moment, Hasga spoke.

"Shut up."

Himea complied and kept quiet. She nodded. Then looked intently at the two of them,

"In that case, I get what this is all about. You guys wanted to save your mother. But you can't get close to the focal point of the << **Church** >>. That's why you made use of the power of the organization antagonistic to the << **Church** >> to rescue her. Then, isn't it high time for you to return Haruka to us?"

Serge smiled at that,

"We've already released Shigure Haruka-san."

He replied.

He said that they had released Haruka.

Without thing,

"R-Really?"

Taito asked.

Serge nodded readily.

"Yes."

"But, where?"

"There's no way we could bring her here right? We've returned her to the school. Is it better to return her to her own place at this time?"

"Y-yeah, then."

"Yes. It's fine for you guys to go back as well. Rather, we've come here to save you. You guys managed to rescue Ela of the East earlier than we thought. As thanks, we've come to save you."

Upon saying that, Serge snapped his fingers. Following that, before his fingers, a dimensional rift appeared.

"Now, let's go back. With the power of a Vampire << Most Ancient Sorcerer >>, you guys might be fine on your own, but then again, she's afraid of the Ophius Mercenaries of Ancient Times right? It's better to get out of here as soon as possible."

In response to those words,

"Then, then we are going to get saved?"

Taito said, and looked at Himea. But even now, her face retained a look of cautiousness,

"But, I have another question."

Hasga then said with an exasperated face.

"You have more questions?"

"Obviously right. Didn't you guys just yanked Taito's arm off? Aren't you guys being too forceful in your rescuing?"

But, Hasga smiled,

"Because you guys were running away right? We want to get you guys out of the << **Church** >> before the Ophius Mercenaries of Ancient Times comes, but yet, you guys just won't stay still."

"....."

"Well, it's fine if you don't believe us. You guys can just stay here and become the prey of the << **Church** >>."

"....."

"So, what are you going to do? We don't want to remain in this godforsaken place anymore."

On hearing those words, Himea thought for a little longer and then turned towards Taito.

"Seems like..... we are really getting saved."

Taito then smiled.

"Yeah."

"We didn't die."

"Yeah."

"I can continue to be with you, Taito."

"Yeah."

"On top of that, that adulterer who's head over heels in love with Taito also returned to the school, all the good things just keep piling up right!"

To those words,

"Uwu?"

Taito uttered without thinking. He then looked at her face. He looked intently at her teasing, smiling face,

"Himea, you really are a big bully."

To that,

"Yup. I shall always bully you forever and ever, Taito!"

She said and smiled again. She hugged him. To have her hugging him in front of others, it was just a little.

"....."

Taito then looked at Serge and Hasga, and they still had the same expressions as earlier.

Serge with his kind, smiling face.

Hasga with his reprimanding, cursing face.

The two half-breeds with completely opposite personalities looked at Taito,

"..... I'm sorry."

He apologized without thinking.

Then again, after hearing their story, he thought that they too had it tough.

As half-breeds, they were hated by the Elves, their mother was sold and handed over to the << **Church** >>, and in order to save her, they needed

someone's help, but there probably wasn't anyone who would just willingly infiltrate the << **Church** >> to save her for them, so they had no choice but to kidnap Haruka.....

Well, still, abducting Haruka was too terrible a thing for him to forgive them, but from their appearance, it really seemed like they had not laid a finger on Haruka.

On top of that, she had gone back safely.

Then, wasn't it a happy ending for everyone?

Taito thought.

Hasga then said,

"Excuse me, didn't I say that we don't have much time left? If you want to flirt around, can you do that after getting back?"

He said.

Yeah, that's right, Taito then replied.

"Himea, anyway, let's go back for now. It's bad to keep on staying here."

She then nodded. But, she continued clinging on to him. Taito then gave a troubled smile, and then started walking with her clinging on to him.

"I just need to enter this?"

He said as he pointed at the dimensional rift in the air opened up in the center of the forest.

Serge then entered the rift first,

"Please come along after me."

He said.

Taito then nodded and together with Himea, he passed through the rift.

Upon passing through the rift, they entered a room that was as large as the student council room. The wall and sky and floor as well, were painted with a blue fluorescent color.

"Where's this place?"

Taito asked, to which Serge answered. In his usual gentle, kind voice,

"One of our workrooms."

"Workroom?"

"Yeah. Well, as Curse Breakers, when we get requests to seal up powerful demons, demon gods, or curses, we will use this workroom. This place is laden with a spell that will amplify my sealing powers."

"Heeehh. I don't really get half of what you said though....."

Serge then smiled.

"Why don't I show it to you. Since right now, we happen to have a monster we can seal....."

"Er no, I don't really need to see it though."

"No no, in future, we'd like you, Kurogane-san, the << **Military** >>, as well as the student council to employ us Curse Breakers, so please take a good look at our work."

He said.

By that time, Hasga had already returned from the territory of the << **Church** >> to this world.

He closed the rift to the << **Church** >>.

"Fuh, it's a good thing we didn't bump into the Mercenaries of Ancient Times."

He said.

He then looked up,

"So, Aniki, are you done?"

Serge smiled at that.

"It's just about to begin."

"Hm. Quickly get on with it."

"Yeah. I also want to show off my skill."

After saying that, Serge knelt down and pressed his palm against the floor.

And then.

"Activate, Azure of Absolute Truth."

He said.

Instantly, the ceiling, the walls, the floor, were all filled with magic circles and then,

Gyaaa

In the center of the magic circle floating on the blue wall, the shrieks of a monster rang out.

Abnormally long flowing golden hair, and eyes hidden by talismans. Six arms. Her lower body was melded into the magic circle on the wall and she was unable to move, but even so, he knew clearly who the monster was.

He knew who she was.

Ela of the East.

That very Ela was shrieking. It was such a painful shriek that even Taito trembled on hearing it.

Taito's eyes widened and he looked at Serge. He looked intently at the Serge, who was still smiling calmly and kindly,

"W-Why are you doing that? She, Ela of the East, is your mother right....."

However, before he could finish, Serge moved. Taking one step forward, he thrust his palm towards Taito's chest.

No, he thrust towards the Himea who was clinging to Taito's chest and grabbed her face.

"Wha."

Himea uttered in surprise but Serge did not stop. With that, he pulled Himea from Taito and pushed against the floor. Then,

"I really hate doing this to a girl."

Himea then grabbed hold of Serge's arms with both her hands.

"Do you know who you are dealing with? If you don't stop now, I'll kill....."

"It's futile. It's a pity but you've lost your powers in exchange for saving Kurogane Taito, isn't it? We have collected all the intelligence about you guys. On top of that, this place is my domain. Even a god can't resist my sealing powers here."

Upon saying that, he pressed Himea's face against the floor. Then, at center of the place where she was pressed against, a magic circle expanded. Himea's face sank into the floor and became one with it.

Taito then started,

"Damn you, what are you trying to....."

"Don't interfere."

Hasga cut in. His fist flew. It was not that fast a movement. A movement which Taito, who had practiced karate before, could dodge.

Taito attempted to brush off that fist.

But,

"Destroy."

Hasga said. Following that, the space around Hasga's fist contorted with a red hue. The contorted space struck Taito's fist and that arm was destroyed. No, the arm was disintegrated. Taito's eyes widened and he took a step backward.

Even though his arm had started regenerating, he had not the slightest clue what the man before him had done to him.

He had probably used some kind of magic.

Taito glared at Hasga.

He then shrugged his shoulders.

"Don't glare at me like that. We are just doing our job."

"Job?"

"Yeah."

"What manner of job is this? We saved Ela of the East just as you told us to. And thus you released Haruka. That should be the end of it right? But yet, what the hell is this? What are you planning to do?"

He said.

In the meantime, Himea's body gradually sank deeper and deeper into the floor.

And so did the body of Ela of the East. Her body gradually merged into the wall.

Ela of the East was no longer screaming.

As Himea's face had sunk in right from the start, no sound could be heard from her.

But he knew that she was still alive. Her limbs were flinging in resistance, and he knew that she was still alive from that.

Thus he needed to go save her right away, but Hasga was obstructing Taito and preventing him from doing that.

Taito was glaring at that Hasga,

"Move."

He said.

But Hasga shrugged his shoulders annoyingly.

"Don't want to."

"If you don't move, I'll kill you."

"Hehhh."

"I'm serious."

Taito clenched his fist, and the flames of the Tenma Martes Devil appeared.

But Hasga merely looked at that, sighed out softly, then said,

"In the first place, we don't really want to fight you. We just have a request to seal up Saitohimea. So, won't you just go home already? Since I'm going to open the << **Way** >> for you."

On hearing those words,

"Huhh!?"

Taito yelled.

"I don't get what you are saying."

"No, you do right? We are going to seal the interfering witch. You human can go back to your normal world. At any rate, you actually were bothered by the persistent witch who's all over you right? Isn't this a good chance? We'll seal her for you. You can just return to your peaceful world and live happily ever after....."

But, before he could finish, Taito had started running. He raised his fist. And unleashed his flames of the Tenma Martes Devil toward Hasga.

With that, the powerful destructive force which was enough to send his own body flying was released toward Hasga,

"....."

That should be the case but.

"Undo."

Hasga said a single word.

Suddenly, the flames of the Tenma Martes Devil disappeared from Taito's arm. Without unleashing any kind of power, only his fist was flying toward Hasga.

Hasga grabbed it. With a crushing force, he grabbed it.

Then,

"..... Aniki..... Serge had said it as well, this place is our domain. Here, our powers get amplified several times. Be it my big brother's sealing power. Or my power of destruction. And so, I've destroyed the magic residing in your arm. The magic which you rely on is ineffective against me."

He said. With that, Hasga further increased his strength in his grip on Taito's fist, and was about to say 'Destroy'. The surrounding area around Hasga's arm once again started distorting into a reddish hue.

Taito then pulled back his fist frantically. And took a step back.

Hasga then nodded.

"You understand don't you? You can't win against us. You can't save the witch."

"Don't shit with....."

"I'm not shitting with you. And you can be honest about it right now. We've already sealed the witch's eyes and ears. You can admit that you have been vexed by Saitohimea's tagging along with you."

"It's not like....."

"It is, isn't it? Having a witch getting obsessed over you all of a sudden, be it Elves, the << **Military** >>, the << **Church** >>, and getting dragged into worlds filled with crazy monsters, the truth is, you really want to go back to your original world right?"

"....."

"To top it off, even your childhood friend got kidnapped."

"....."

"At the very least, that's the kind of person our requester wants us to save. To save the you who's manipulated by the witch. That's why we are doing it.

We are saving you from the << Most Ancient Sorcerer >> Saitohimea."

He said.

Taito glared at Hasga.

"..... what the hell are you talking about?"

He asked.

"..... you have a request to save me? Who on earth would that requester be?"

"....."

"Answer me."

"I won't say the name of the requester."

"Don't shit....."

"I told you we aren't shitting you. Enough of that, just shut up and go back to your human world. That's what your heart truly desire. Go back to

becoming a normal human being. Don't waste your life stupidly in such a place."

On saying that, Hasga waved his hand. Before the area he waved at, a dimensional rift appeared. While he could not ascertain the place that was connected by the dimensional rift, it was probably somewhere in the human world.

Taito looked at that. He then looked at Hasga, and then at Serge.

He could not save her again. Even though he had promised her, he could not save her again.

These two people were clearly more powerful than Taito, and quite frankly, it was pretty unthinkable for him to be able to defeat the both of them and rescue Himea.

But still, even so,

"..... from what you said, it sounds like you are sealing up Himea for my sake, but you mistaken about it. I've never thought of Himea as the cause of my unhappy memories....."

But, cutting him off, Hasga said.

"We are doing it now. No, we've already long started."

"Like I said, what the hell are you talking about? Why are you making your own assumptions about how I feel....."

Hasga cut him off again.

"The << **Church** >> imprisoned our mother and remodeled her. You've seen it right? They gave her six arms, and buried her eyes beneath magic circles. What do you think of it when you see that? Do you think that's

terrible? But Saitohimea did the same thing. Capturing a normal, ordinary human who's living in peace, and made him unable to die."

"....."

"And she said she wants to live with you. Telling you to throw away your family, friend, and lover to live with her. Telling you to protect her in insane worlds filled with monsters. Where's the pride in that? You are just being used....."

"It's not....."

"It is. But I never thought we could talk you round. Now, go back. At any rate, you can't win against us. You can't save her. So, after getting released from the grasp of the witch, go enjoy your life in the normal human world. Once the witch is sealed, your previous form will be erased, and you will be able to forget her."

"No, I'm not....."

"You will forget. No, in reality, you should have forgotten. In those nine years, you didn't remember anything right? So, during then, were you unhappy? Were you unhappy in the time when you had forgotten about Saitohimea?"

Taito's face grimaced. Was he unhappy during the time when he had forgotten about Himea?

To that question, his face contorted.

Looking back, he had never felt that he was unfortunate.

With kind parents and a little sister, and the smiling Haruka who was his neighbor, taking away the time when he had been bullied by people at school before meeting Himea, he had always been blessed with friends.

There was never once he thought himself as unfortunate.

There was never once he thought himself as unfortunate without Himea at his side.

Hasga smiled.

"See see. You don't need Saitohimea. And besides, you are blessed. Unlike us, you are loved by your kin. So, don't betray that love. As an ordinary human, don't throw away your life needlessly and make your friends sad."

Upon saying that, he pointed at the dimensional rift.

"Now, go back."

"....."

"If you still refuse to step through, I shall tell you one more thing. The one who has requested us to save you is a human who is truly worried about you. That person really wants to save you. If you were to continue to be with the << Most Ancient Sorcerer >>, your life will be in a mess, and she had told us that she wanted us to prevent that from happening."

"....."

"She wants you to smile, enjoy your life, and have a happy life."

"....."

"You shouldn't be disregarding her feelings and fool around."

On hearing those words.

Taito looked at Hasga.

Then,

"..... the requester is Haruka huh.....?"

He asked.

But of course, Hasga did not reply. But he continued.

"..... how did Haruka know about me and that Himea is a Vampire << Most Ancient Sorcerer >>? Did you guys tell her?"

"....."

"Answer me. Did you guys tell her and made use of her?"

"....."

"If you don't answer her, I'll kill....."

But, cutting him off, Hasga said.

He said something else that was completely incomprehensible.

"..... Shigure Haruka loves you."

He said suddenly.

Unable to comprehend that, Taito involuntarily started,

"What the hell are you saying....."

He murmured in a groaning tone, but Hasga ignored him and continued.

"That girl loves you so much that she's willing to throw her life away. That's why we undertook this request. It's because we wanted to reward her for her pure feelings that we undertook this request. Even though she's pretty much powerless, she still wants to protect you. Because she loves you. Because she loves you, she's willing to risk her life to protect you. But even if you don't respond to those feelings of hers, it's fine as well. It

doesn't concern us anyway. Since there are few things that go smoothly in this world."

Hasga said. Then, with a somewhat sad face, he looked in the direction of Serge, and then at his mother. He looked at the Ela of the East who was sealed into the wall.

Then once again, he looked at Taito,

"It's fine you know? Come hit me. I won't resist. Once you hit me, everything will be over. The witch..... Saitohimea will be released. Though everything Shigure Haruka had risked her life would come to naught, well, that also can't be helped. Since that's also part of the request."

"....."

"Shigure Haruka said this. If you love Saitohimea to the point of being willing to throw your life away. If you love her to the extent that you would be willing to throw away your family, your friends, and be willing to give up all your ordinary days as a human, when that happens, she would want us to release Saitohimea, she said. Since at that point in time, she won't be able to fill the hole in your heart. Since she won't be able to fill the hole in your heart at losing Saitohimea, she had said. So, if you still want to save the witch, then so be it."

"....."

"If you want to betray all those who love you and save the witch, it'll be your decision. And so be it."

Hasga said.

And he couldn't comprehend that at all.

Why all of a sudden, Haruka's name appeared at this juncture.

How did Haruka get involved in this crazy story?

He didn't get it at all.

A normal human being. He couldn't understand how someone ordinary, who should be living in a safe world, got involved in this stupid story.

But, even if he didn't get it, he knew why it had come to this.

"....."

It's my fault.

Haruka got dragged into this strange world for the sake of saving me. Even though Taito was not sure from where and how she got to know that Taito got involved with some strange incidents, but she had been worrying by herself and had desperately thought of how she could save him.

And it seemed like she had gone to the extent of risking her life.

Without any power, as an ordinary human, Haruka had come to the center of this crazy story, and risked her life to save me.

Is there something as foolish as this?

He had betrayed her.

"....."

He had kissed Himea, and was going to choose Himea, but yet.

But yet.

For the sake of such a person, Haruka had risked her life, such a foolish thing.....

"....."

At that moment, Hasga said.

"If you understand the situation, it's about time for you to go home. Not just Shigure Haruka. You should have your other friends and pals. A human should just get along with other humans."

"....."

"..... che. If you can't choose, then I'll forcefully drive you out. If I do that, then your conscience won't hurt right? Fine. I'll do it. If we try to kill each other, you will lose. So, I'm going to drive you out from here. Then."

With that, Hasga started moving. He pulled back his feet, and took a few steps forward. His movements were sharp. If he received this fist head on to his face. If he received it without dodging, his semicircular canals would probably be shaken, and he probably wouldn't be able to stand up anymore. If that happened, he would just get thrown to the other side of the dimensional rift.

Without getting troubled by anything, everything would end.

Without getting worried about a troublesome thing like choosing Himea or choosing Haruka, everything would end.

That's why, for an instant, it might be good if I don't do anything at all, Taito thought.

"....."

But, for some reason, his arm moved by itself. Even though he was tired of various things and didn't feel like doing anything more, but yet, his arm started moving to brush away Hasga's fist on its own.

Hasga said to that.

"Stop pretending to be worried. You should be wanting to abandon Saitohimea."

While saying that, his power of destruction once again started invoking in the area surrounding his fist. The space distorted with a red hue, and Taito's arm, shoulder, and even his chest got blown away. His heart stopped once and he lost consciousness.

And immediately, with the power conferred by Himea, his body started regenerating.

Hasga said to that.

"..... we can erase that regenerating power. We can seal all of Saitohimea's powers. You shall return to a be a human being. And in truth you desire that....."

In the midst of those words, Taito raised his fist. This time round, in his fist resided the power of the Tenma Martes Devil.

Then, once again,

"Destroy."

Said Hasga. The distorted red space around Hasga's fist became a little larger. With that, Taito's flames of the Tenma Martes Devil in his fist once again disappeared.

But, Hasga's movements did not stop. With that power of destruction, he pushed against Taito's chest. Then, a hole appeared in his chest.

With that, he was killed twice easily. And by Ela of the East three times. One time from the missiles launched by the choppers of the << **Church** >>. That totaled up to six times. If he died again, he wouldn't be able to come back to life anymore.

But yet, Hasga raised his arm. *Destroy*, he murmured. Taito could not withstand it at all. Their strengths were too far apart. Unable to do anything to him with the power of the Tenma Martes Devil, Taito could not do a thing. On top of that, he couldn't fire those flames of the Tenma Martes Devil after dying six times.

In other words,

"..... I'm dea....."

At that moment, Hasga grabbed Taito's face. And pushed him against the floor.

"Hahh, The color of your face has changed. Did you use up all your lives?"

Taito could not reply. But, unbothered, Hasga continued.

"You can no longer die. So, just speak your true voice already. Are you going to risk your life for Saitohimea? Betraying Shigure Haruka. Betraying your family. Betraying your friends. Even with that, do you love Saitohimea to the point of being willing to risk your life to protect her?"

He said.

Taito looked up at Hasga. He looked up at the Hasga who was pushing his face against the floor.

Then,

"I don't want to make anyone sad....."

Before Taito could finish, Hasga punched him in the face. A very hard punch.

"Gah."

Taito groaned. The side of his mouth was grazed and blood flowed. But the wound didn't heal. Since he had already died six times. Without having fifteen minutes gone by, his regenerative powers would not invoke.

After ascertaining that, Hasga continued.

"Don't joke around anymore. You don't want to make anyone sad? For a brat without any powers, how can you protect Saitohimea? Those guys who are targeting the witch are stronger than us, you know? If you can't even win against us, you'll just die one of these days."

"....."

"You may even just die tomorrow. No, maybe today. At any rate, just by staying by the side of Saitohimea, you'll die. That's why, in order to prevent that from happening, Shigure Haruka sought for our help to save you. Not wanting you to die, Shigure Haruka risked her life and sought for us to save you. But yet, you said that you don't want to make anyone sad. Shigure Haruka was crying, but yet you said that you don't want to make anyone sad. Don't you think that's going a bit too far?"

On hearing those words, Taito kept quiet.

On hearing Hasga said that Haruka was crying, he had nothing to say to that.

Thereafter, an image of Haruka crying surfaced in his mind. He had seen her crying face many times. But, all along, they had merely been caused by trifle matters. Be it having a fight with each other, or a friend's dog had died.

During those times, Haruka cried, but on the following day, she would be back to smiles again.

But, the last time Taito had seen Haruka, she should have been smiling. She should have been smiling happily.

But yet, Hasga had said that she had been crying.

She had been crying without Taito being aware of it.

That was a little.

"....."

At that moment, Hasga continued.

"It's enough right. Stop messing around and make your choice. You want to save everyone, you want to get involved with everything, there's no way you can get the best of everything. You are no longer a kid, so know that already."

"....."

"Shigura Haruka was crying. Maybe Saitohimea really loves you. But you can only choose one. You have to make a choice some day. So choose now."

"....."

But Taito could not respond to that. Because it was not something he could answer so readily. Whether be it doing what to who, or who did he love, it was not something he could decide so easily just by his feelings alone.

That's why Taito could not answer to that.

Then, Hasga's face contorted,

"If you can't decide for yourself, then let me decide for you."

He said. He raised his fist, and he struck Taito's face.

"Gah."

Taito screamed in agony. His head was banged against the floor strongly and his world spun.

Hasga then said.

"Until you decide, I will keep hitting you. If you say that you are going to leave Saitohimea behind and go back, I'll release you immediately. But if you don't say that, then the thing that Shigure Haruka has feared will come to pass. You will die here."

Upon saying that, his fist dropped down again. The fist struck him on the eyes. His right eye could no longer see consequently. Immediately, his right eye's field of vision became dark.

"....."

Pain and fear ran through his entire body.

He would really die if he didn't do anything. Dying like a normal human.

He had forgotten that fear. As he had been coming back to life every time he died, he had forgotten about that fear.

But that returned right now.

Hasga's fist dropped down. Sinking into his cheek, and he felt an intense pain.

"Enough of this, so decide quickly. You will really die you know?"

He was told.

Taito was on the verge of tears.

With pain and despair, he was on the verge of tears. He didn't want to be hit like this anymore. Obviously. Anyone would have disliked getting hit.

On top of that, if he continued to get hit in that manner, he would soon die.

There probably will be people who will be afraid of that right?

"....."

Hasga raised his fist again.

Taito looked up at that and trembled.

Hasga then said.

"Now, go back. You have died six times. After the next time, you won't be able to come back to life."

Taito then answered.

"I know."

"Then stop putting on a bluff. In the end, you can't betray your kin. You can't betray Shigure Haruka. You can't throw away your life....."

But, at that moment, Taito raised his fist. Aiming at Hasga's face, Taito punched.

Hasga did not dodge. Taito's fist struck his cheek,

"..... see, this is the answer. You can't use the Tenma Martes Devil. You value your own life."

He said.

But, promptly,

"That's right. I value my life."

Taito said.

Hasga then nodded.

"Then, it's decided. We'll seal Saitohimea. You shall go back to your own world....."

But, cutting him off, Taito said.

"I won't go back."

"Huh?"

"I'll save Himea."

Taito said.

Hasga then glared at him,

"..... then, you shall die here, and make Shigure Haruka cry....."

"I won't die here. So I won't cause Haruka to cry."

On hearing those words, Hasga's eyes widened and he looked down at him,

"Huh?"

He said.

"What the hell are you shitting about....."

But, cutting him off, Taito said. With just one good eye, he looked up at Hasga,

"I'm not shitting around. I'm serious. It's obvious right? I've hit countless times, killed countless times, so why would I be shitting around? There were so many times I wanted run away in fear."

"Then."

"But, I can't do that can I? If I run away from here, how would I continue to live in the future? As someone who have run away in fear because he's going to get killed? Don't shit with me. Himea risked her life to return me back to life. On top of that, Haruka also put her life on the life to save me. So, what? Am I going to run away just because I'm about to die? There's no

way I can do such a thing right? That's why I won't..... I won't let either of them cry and put my best foot....."

But, at that moment, he was given a huge whack. A fist struck his ear, and his head almost snapped. His right ear could no longer hear and it did not recover. His eardrum might have been destroyed.

He was again a step closer to death.

Shivers of fear ran through his entire body.

And his brain commanded him.

Run, run, run, run.

Don't care about others, just quickly get out of here.

Hasga said.

"What the hell do you mean by putting your best foot forward? Are you seriously a kid? No matter how much effort you put in, in this world....."

But his words got cut off.

Even the command to run away from his brain got cut off.

Taito then said.

"Who cares about what can or can't be done in this world? You think I care? Calling me a kid? That's right. I'm a kid. So what? If it's not enough to just give my best, then I will give even more of my best. If I can't achieve through my all, then I'll give more of my all....."

Then, once again, the fist swung down. Smacking into the middle of his face, smashing his head into the floor. Behind his head, he felt a bit of warmth. He was probably bleeding.

The next time he got hit, he would probably die. He would definitely die. He knew that.

Hasga said. With slightly narrowed eyes,

"..... that should be the end of your pride. You have already worked hard. But, you are going to die. The next hit will seal your doom. So run away. Nobody will blame you if you run away."

But, Taito looked up at Hasga and said.

"I won't run."

"Don't shit....."

"I won't run. I will beat you up and save Himea, and then go back to where Haruka is."

"Unreasonable."

"I'll do it even if it's unreasonable. If I'm giving up even before I've tried, then it's better to die."

"Then die....."

"I'm telling you I'm not going to die!"

"This guy..... you should just shut up."

"You should be the one to shut up! I've never asked you for your opinions. Even if it's a natural thing for you to give up in your world when it's unreasonable, it's different for mine!"

"....."

"Even though she knew it was unreasonable, Himea brought me back to life, even when she knew that it was unreasonable, Haruka tried to protect me!

Then, I shall do that too. In order not to lose to them, I shall do it too. You guys give up everyday. But I won't give up. I'll work hard for everything I want, and get them!"

Taito yelled.

He yelled hard till his throat threatened to tear apart. In fact, his throat probably tore a little. The taste of blood filled his mouth. But that wound didn't heal.

To which Hasga,

"....."

Kept silent for a while and looked at him intently, and then made a fed-up face, a face in utter amazement, and turned to face behind him.

"..... I really hate dealing with this kid."

Serge then smiled.

"Ah-haha. Well, just hang in for a little while. I just need a little more time to complete the seal on Saitohimea. When that happens, no matter what he says, it'll be too late....."

But Taito said.

"I won't let you."

Hasga then said,

"What can you do when you can't even move?"

He said.

Taito then tightly gripped the fist of Hasga that was punching down into his cheek.

Hasga looked at that fist,

"If you use the flames of the Tenma Martes Devil, you will die you know? To top it off, it's useless against me."

He said.

But he knew that.

That's why he never thought of using the flames of Tenma Martes Devil to attack.

Taito opened his fist. And grabbed Hasga's hair.

Then,

"Hn."

Hasga groaned a little in exasperation,

"I told you to stop struggling."

And he was about to hit him on the face. But he turned his face and avoided it. Unable to avoid it altogether, Taito's cheek got grazed. But still, he held on to Hasga's hair.

"Hey, that hurts. Let go!"

Just as Hasga was going to raise his fist again, he pulled his hair with all his strength. Using his body weight as much as possible, he pulled his hair. With that, Hasga, who was sitting atop Taito, lost his balance and fell.

Aiming for that opening, he raised his left fist. He raised his left fist towards the Serge who was in the process of sealing Himea.

And he yelled.

"Ska'rz"

Whether that's really the deep curse of a cat, and whether it's going to be a useful magic or not, he knew not.

But even so, Taito shouted that at the top of his lungs.

Since that was the only thing he could do. Then, it was fine for him to just do that.

He valued his own life.

He wanted to save Himea.

In order not to let Haruka and the rest cry, he had to struggle until the very end, he thought.

Even though doing such a thing might be meaningless.

For an ordinary idiot who seemed to have no power at all, struggling like this might very well be meaningless.

But even so, instead of not doing anything and let it end, it's better to give his all, he thought.

He hollered.

Then, 'plop', Nyankichi was summoned onto his head. All the fur of Nyankichi stood up. His eyes shone golden. Then,

"Nya!"

He said. A magic matching his non-anxious, uncool, weak self who's like a small fry was activated.

Borrowing the power of Nyankichi, a purple fog appeared from Taito's left hand and flew towards Serge.

Then, Hasga reacted. He jumped up from above Taito,

"Destroy."

He murmured. That fist which was causing the space to distort assaulted the purple cloud.

But, as a result of Hasga's fist, that purple mist spread out across the surroundings. Smashing into the blue coating, it spread in the room which was laid with magic circles.

Then, the wall was permeated with smoke.

At that moment, the magic circles became dull. As they looked upon it, the glow of the magic circles, like iron turning into rust, became muddled with red-black.

Hasga then said. Glaring at him,

"What did you do!?"

He howled.

But even if he did that, Taito did not know. Since Taito never did hear what was the exact nature of this magic.

Nyankichi then said in his head.

"Even though I don't understand the situation, I did the curse anyway-Ni!"

"On what?"

Taito asked in his head, to which Nyankichi replied.

"On the magic."

In other words, this was that sort of magic.

A curse that curses magic.

At the same time, Himea, who had been unable to move all this while suddenly moved a finger. 'Tap', 'tap', 'tap', tapping on the floor multiple times. Upon doing that, at the center of the place she tapped, a black hole appeared and a slime-shaped monster flew out.

Serge looked up. He raised his other hand that was not holding Himea down,

"Seal."

He said.

In order to bind the slime-shaped monster, chains appeared. Constricting the body of the monster, they forced the monster back to the hole.

But Himea did not stop. She raised her hand and grabbed the arm of Serge. Using the finger other hand, she started writing glowing words in the air.

Serge then,

"Hasga."

Called out.

"The power of the room is falling. My sealing spell has been analyzed by the << Vampire << Most Ancient Sorcerer >> >>."

But, at that moment,

"I'm already done analyzing it."

While saying that, Himea sat up. With her beautiful, mischievous, bewitching red eyes, she looked at Serge intently,

"I'll kill you."

Upon saying that, she waved the finger which had been writing the words.

Serge could not react to it.

But Hasga had already moved.

"The one who will die is you, monster."

Upon saying that, he raised his fist. Once again, the same power of destruction resided in there.

But Taito stopped it. He brushed at the leg of Hasga from behind.

With that, Hasga fell. And his fist missed Himea.

Himea completed her magic. She pointed it at Serge and was about to release it.

Hasga shouted.

"Stop!?"

He shouted.

Himea then grinned,

"What?"

She said.

The magic.

The magic that was to be used to kill Serge activated.

With that, everything would end.

That should have been it.

"....."

But, Taito moved as well. After tripping Hasga, he jumped up and ran. With that, he jumped towards Himea who was about to release her magic.

Realizing that, she looked at him,

"Eh?"

But, ignoring her, he flew towards her and hugged her.

With that, Himea's magic missed Serge. The thin sliver of light released from her finger hit the ceiling and made a hole in it.

This time round,

"....."

This time round, everything really ended.

In his chest, as if to look at the surroundings, Himea's slender body squirmed, following that, she looked up at Taito.

At that time, the wound on Taito's face has disappeared. It seemed like fifteen minutes had passed since the first time he died.

Looking at him, Himea had a face that said that she clearly did not understand what had just happened.

"Er-erm, Taito, why did you save that fella....."

But, as if to interrupt her, Taito strengthened his embrace. 'Squeeze', he hugged her tightly.

Himea immediately went silent.

"..... ah ~ well, since it feels real good, forget it."

She said. With that, she returned the embrace.

Hasga then said to that,

"Why did you say my brother....."

But, cutting him off, Taito said,

"I'm going back."

But still, Hasga said,

"No no, that's not it. Why did you save us? Are you an idiot? Normally, brats who would say that they will save everyone don't exist....."

"I'm telling you that I'm going back!"

Hasga and Serge then exchanged looks. And pointed at the dimensional rift,

"Go ahead."

He said.

Taito then looked at Himea,

"Well, let's go."

He said.

She then smiled happily,

"I don't really know what happened when I was sealed, but today, Taito, you sure are reliable."

Upon hearing that, Taito smiled wryly.

"No, the truth is, I was the usual spineless wreck."

"Eh ~, you aren't such a thing you know ~"

"Yeah, probably. Well, but I'm tired today so let's go back."

"Uhn."

Himea nodded.

Then, the two of them entered the rift in the corner of the room. And they stepped onto some sort of a hill.

But, it was a familiar scenery.

They could see a number of buildings with Japanese-styled tiled roofs, and not of Italy.

Not another world, and not the << **Church** >>,

"It's Japan."

Said Taito.

He looked up at the sky. It appeared to be still night and the sky was filled with stars and the moon.

"Wait, isn't it really bad to be able to see so many stars? This really seems totally countryside. I don't have any money to bring us back home."

He said. The wallet he brought along had only two thousand yen.

Himea then twined her arm around his and said,

"But we are alone together."

"No, that's not the issue here....."

"I love you very much, Taito."

She said.

"I really love you..... Taito, you've always protected me."

She said.

Taito smiled and then looked up at the sky again.

The truth was nothing was resolved.

How did Haruka know about Himea?

Did Haruka really return to the school and was everything really over?

And also, he had no idea how and in what manner should he go about making a choice between the two of them, and as such nothing was resolved, but in any case, Taito let out a sigh of relief.

The reason was because he was in Japan right now.

Not in Italy, or another world, but in Japan.

So,

"..... aah, jeez..... despite my weakness, I'm really glad I managed to protect you....."

Saying that tiredly, Taito hugged the shoulders of Himea who was embracing him.

♦
♦
♦

After staring in blank amazement at the dimensional rift through which an incredibly idiotic human and a strange witch which didn't resembled much of a

disappeared.

"....."

Hasga Entolio turned toward his elder brother.

"..... what do you make of that?"

His brother then smiled.

"Isn't that good?"

"Really?"

"Yeah. I'm a little envious of that straightforward proclamation of how he wanted to acquire everything with his hands."

He said. Serge then stood up and faced the corner of the room.

There, was Ela of the East. Sapped of strength, their mother was there, all quiet.

Serge then nodded and said,

"Yeah. It has all ended, Hasga."

Hasga's face then contorted.

Up till now.

Ever since moving Ela of the East to this room, what they had done was to seal the pain in her.

Sealing the pain caused by the curse that was consuming Ela of the East from the inside.

They had been erasing the pain caused by the growing seed of a fallen god which the << **Church** >> had transplanted into her.

The species of the fallen god would confer great power to its host, but at the same time, destroy the host from inside. Shrouded in eternal pain, the host would lose its sanity. And then before long, the host would be unable to retain its original form, and take on the monstrous appearance of the fallen god.

Ela of the East was on the verge of becoming the fallen god.

But with what little was remaining of her consciousness, she suppressed it.

Once she succumbed to the pain, she would take on the fallen god's features. That was why they sealed that pain.

And that was all done.

Serge had used his power to erase the pain of Ela of the East.

Then, she looked up. She looked up at Serge. With a terribly, terribly tired face. Even though her eyes were sealed by talismans and was probably unable to see, she still looked up, as if she could feel the presence of Serge.

And she said.

"..... ki."

In a faint voice, she said.

"..... k-kill me..... I can't go back to my original form anymore..... I don't know who you are but..... if you are here to help me..... if you are taking pity on me, then kill me....."

She said.

"I have children..... two of them..... I don't want them..... to see..... this form of mine..... I don't want..... to..... let them see....."

She said.

Serge then nodded. Kindly. With a really kind smile, he stroked the hair of Ela of the East,

"..... it'll be fine. We'll grant you your wish. There will be no pain. You can rest easy."

"T-T-Th-Thank you."

"Now, you can sleep."

"T-Thank yo....."

At that moment, Serge raised his hand before the face of Ela of the East. With that, her consciousness was sealed. But with his powers, he couldn't erase Ela of the East.

That's why Serge turned to Hasga.

Hasga then nodded.

"Aah."

And he took a few steps forward. He looked at the tired face of Ela of the East. He gazed into the face of his mother whom he had always been wanting to meet all these years.

He had always wanted to see her. When he get to see her, he would grumble and be like a spoiled brat, among many other things. It was for that he had worked so hard. Saving money, gathering information, working hard desperately for that.

And the outcome was this huh.

"....."

She asked them to kill her. She asked them to kill her because she didn't want to show this form to her children.

Looking at that, he thought.

"....."

Even though this world was such a terrible one.

Even though there was so much terrible unfair things, but yet, the words of the idiot Kurogane Taito just now surfaced in his mind.

He had said that he wanted to get hold of everything.

Giving all his all and getting hold of everything.

Those words could be called nothing but foolish.

Just by looking at his mother's form, it was clear to him. In such a cruel world, in a meaningless way, she became a sacrifice. Even though she was also living earnestly. Even though she had been living earnestly with everything she got.

As one was becoming an adult, one should know of this. No, one should know of this even when one was a child.

There were a number of things that one could not do anything but give up on them. If one wanted to have something, one had to throw away something, that was the world.

But, even when this was something a child would know, that fella had cried out that he didn't want that. He cried out that he was going to give his all and get everything into his hands.

Of course, if just by hollering that one could get everything in his hands, Hasga also wanted to try, he thought.

If he wished it strongly, if he put his life on the line to pray and could get it from that alone, he would be more than willing to put his life on the line no matter how many times it would take, he thought.

But.

"....."

Hasga looked at his mother before him. He looked intently at his mother who had told her sons to kill her.

And his face contorted,

"..... I also want to cry out..... I also want to cry out that I want to obtain it..... even if I cry out many many times..... I won't get anything right....."

He said in a trembling voice.

Serge then smiled sadly. He then stroked his hair. Even though he himself should feel terrible pained, but his big brother would always stroked him gently,

"Even though it may be so this time..... but, it would give us courage. Next time, we just might be able to live like him."

"....."

"If he's in trouble someday, we'll go save him. If we, cursed half-breeds, want to aim for a world where we can obtain anything, punishment shouldn't befall us right?"

"....."

"But today's ..... different. A pity, but it's different. Since we don't have enough power, this is the best we can do. So, let's make it easy for our mother....."

He said.

Hasga then said,

"..... uhn."

He acknowledged softly. And he raised his hand.

Before the face of Ela of the East.

He raised his hand, and was about to say 'Destroy' softly.

With that, everything would end.

The story in which he had worked hard all this while would come to an end.

Accumulating money, buying information, thinking about how to bring her out of the << **Church** >>.

Even though all those should be ending but.

"....."

His hand shook. His body trembled. When they found the whereabouts of their mother, he already knew this outcome and had mentally prepared himself all this while but.

That fool.

"....."

That fool, Kurogane Taito, said something unnecessary.

"..... I."

Hasga said. He could feel his face contort. He started tearing.

And then he said.

"..... I also don't want to give up."

He said softly.

"..... I know that it's impossible but..... I want to look for a way to return our mother back to normal....."

"It's impossible."

"....."

"If we make her suffer anymore than this, she will be very pitiful."

"But."

"Hasga."

Serge then said. With his usual kind voice, he said.

But Hasga looked at his big brother and said.

"..... even though I know it's impossible, I want to give it my all."

He said the same stupid words as the fool earlier.

On hearing that, Serge smiled with a troubled face. Stroking his head again, he then put his hand on his mother's head.

"..... I'll seal every bit of her for now."

He said.

Then, their mother completely disappeared into the wall.

Following that, he looked at Hasga,

"Well, let's give it a shot."

He said.

Hasga then nodded.

"I'm sorry, Nii-san."

"Don't mind. Hasga has always been a willful kid. But, what should we do from here?"

To that question, Hasga could not answer.

The truth was, they had not really planned any part of their lives beyond rescuing their mother. But, after accomplishing that, they had a new seemingly impossible problem.

Where in the world should they go?

Serge then looked at him and smiled,

"Why don't we go check out the human world?"

He said.

To those words,

"..... haha."

Hasga laughed softly.

Epilogue: --- School of << Despair >>

If one were to ask him, *who do you hate the most in this world?*, the answer will probably be this.

Kurenai Gekkou.

Of course, before this, he had always had a bad personality, a damn stuck-up guy with the worst attitude, but he had never thought that it would come to this.

To quote an instance of that worst attitude.

Having an argumentative exchange over the phone.

"It's me".

"Ah, it's me though."

"You are tough to have survived for a small fry."

"Hey, why didn't you come save us?"

"A genius has his genius circumstances....."

"Shut up, octopus."

"Who're you calling 'octopus'?"

"The bastard you."

"Hmm. Is that all? I'm going to hang up....."

"Hey, of course that's not all."

"Then what? Speak quickly."

"Wait, is that all you have to say after hearing from a student council comrade who has just come back from the land of the dead?"

"Because I already knew you guys were alive. I've already received the reports."

"Ah, is that so?"

"Yeah."

"Well then, you know where we are right now as well?"

"No. I've only received reports from the ***Church*** *that you've disappeared from Italy."*

"I see. Erm, well, a lot happened and it's a bother to explain everything, but before that, what about Haruka....."

"She's already back."

"I see..... I see, that's great."

"Is that all?"

"As I was saying, that can't be all right?"

"Then speak quickly."

"Erm, as I mentioned, it's a bother to explain everything, but anyway, for some reason, we're now in Kyuushuu].

"Horh"

"And without any money, we can't take a plane, so can you open a << **Way** >> to us....."

"Come back on your own."

"Erm, the town we're currently in right now..... wait, eh? What did you just say?"

"I said to come back on your own."

"Huuuuhhhhhh. What kind of idiocy are you talking about? There's no way I can do that right! Didn't I tell you I don't have any money? Well, that's enough, stop fooling around with me already, quickly open a << **Way** >>....."

"I'm not an octopus. You are the octopus."

"Heh? Erm, could it be that you are really angry about that....."

"Is that all? Then I'm hanging up."

"Wait."

"Click."

"Oooooiiiiiyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyy! That, that guy seriously....."

"This phone you are calling could not be reached....."

"I'll killllllllllllllllllllllllll you!"

And that's how the argumentative exchange with the worst guy went, and on top of that, Himea, being Himea,

"I want to continue touring around with Taito in this manner <3"

With that as a reason, she refused to invoke any magic that could take them home faster, and in the end, by the time Taito returned to Miyasaka city, it was five days later.

Five days.

To be absent from school for five consecutive days.

This should have become an incident that was similar to Haruka's disappearance, he thought, but somehow, it turned out that he was involved in some student council work and as a result, had become a sudden transfer student to Italy; something along those lines.

That's why when he reached home, he was greeted with '*you've worked hard ~*', '*to study abroad in Italy, it sure is something*', his little sister had told him, and an unreal conversation about pasta took place, and even when he got to school.

Even when he got to school ---

"....."

It really had been a while since Taito had come back to his 1-3 classroom.

Morning.

Walking along that familiar corridor, opening the door. As he did that, his familiar classmates turned towards him.

"....."

Initially, he thought they were angry. Despite being told that he would get bashed up if he went searching for Haruka alone, but yet, he went ahead and did it anyway.

And for five days. That certainly deserved some bashing, he thought at first, but as his classmates looked at him,

"Mr Italy has come back."

They smiled.

Even the game fanatics Tanaka and Saitou. And the Yamashita-san who sits beside Taito as well. Even the delinquent-like Niwano as well. Everyone was smiling and looking at him.

Even Haruka as well.

"....."

At that moment, Taito looked in her direction. She was looking at him normally as if nothing out of the ordinary had happened.

"You did bring back some souvenirs right -?"

He stopped moving as he looked at that smiling Haruka.

She had that usual really gentle smile on her face. That same kind smile as before.

And he realized it.

He realized that Gekkou had wiped off their memories.

It was something that can't be helped after all. The incident this time round had an extensive involvement with fellows from other worlds after all. In this case, it was indeed best to have erased the memories regarding Haruka's abduction.

That way, the hurt left in everyone's heart would be erased as well.

That applies to Haruka as well.

"....."

In that instant, he remembered what the mixed blood fellow called Hasga had said. The words regarding how Haruka treated himself surfaced in his head.

But all that had turned to nothing.

She only gazed at him kindly and affectionately.

On seeing that, Taito smiled.

"I'm back."

He said.

And then,

"So, where are the souvenirs ~?"

Said the class, and Taito then replied,

"Well, I lost my wallet over there."

""Whatttttttttt?""

They shouted.

Taito smiled. Even though everyone had forgotten about everything, but he would still remember that these people are truly good people.

He smiled. And apologized. And Haruka smiled happily as well. At the very least, there was no visible sign that she was carrying something within the depths of her heart.

No, there may be stuff that had happened to her which he wouldn't know, but then again, everyone has some of that.

Anyone would have had happy moments, as well as sad moments carried in one's heart, but even so, one would have to smile and keep on living, he thought.

That's why Taito smiled as well,

"I shall go to Italy once more and bring back some souvenirs I guess."

He said jokingly.

As he said that, his teacher, Kariya came from behind him,

"It's fine going to Italy and whatnot, don't forget the end-of-terms that will be starting from today onward."

End-of-terms: Tests just before the term ends for vacation

On hearing those words, Taito,

"..... eh? End-of-terms?"

His smiling face disappeared. And he looked at the blackboard. The date written on the blackboard was 1st July.

"Aren't we entering July?"

"Alright guys, the end-of-terms start from today, so get your act together~"

"No no no, I never heard of this....."

"Get in quickly, Kurogane. Ah, or are you going back to the student council room one more time before the test?"

He was told,

"Ah ~, erm, yeah. Well, then."

He nodded. And turned around.

"Then again, if I don't get Gekkou to excuse me from the tests, I'll sure get a red mark for every one of them....."

He groaned.

As he was walking along the corridor with that thought, he noticed. Further down the corridor, there were two tall male students smiling happily as they walked.

One of them had un-Japanese-like golden hair, deep blue eyes, and an invigorating smile.

The other one seemed to have a less tolerant personality, with deep blue hair, golden eyes and well-arranged elf-like facial features,

"Hey, why in the world are you guys hereeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee!?"

Yelled Taito.

However, his voice was cut off by voices from the other classes,

"It's Hasga-senpai from second yearrrrr <3"

"He's with his third year brother <3"

"Both of them are mixed blood from Russia and Japan, I heard."

"Serge-sama, look here~"

It resembled the scene of high pitch shrills that could be heard each time Gekkou walks down the corridor. Hasga made a distasteful scowl on his face, while Serge on the other hand, *my beautiful ladies*, *why are you assembling here??*, he smiled.

On seeing that,

"..... ahh, whatever. I totally don't get what's happening, but whatever. I shall go ask Gekkou....."

And he continued along the corridor in the opposite direction from Hasga and Serge. Then, at last, he arrived at the center part of the fifth floor of the

school premises, where the student council room was, but Gekkou was nowhere in sight.

And neither Himea nor Mirai were around.

Instead, for some reason, a classmate belonging to two classes away from his class, Aomi Izumi, was there. With a lollipop held in her mouth, she looked at him.

"Orh ~, Mr Return-from-Kyuushuu, welcome back."

She said.

Even though the fact that he had just returned from Kyuushuu should only be known to Gekkou,

"Did you get into the student council?"

Asked Taito, to which she smiled.

"Somehow I guess, as I was snooping around in the student council room, I found a way to the << **Military** >>, and as I was doing some adventuring, I got found out by Kurosu-sensei, and he said, *if you want to die, join the student council ~, but smoking is banned*, so I swapped cigarettes for lollipops."

She told him such a wild incomprehensible tale as she was showing him her lollipop.

While her recount made him wonder what on earth was the kind of adventure she embarked on, but with regards to snooping around the << **Military** >>, he could tell that it was just as dangerous as what he just did recently at the << **Church** >>.

Taito then looked intently at Izumi's face,

"..... what the hell are you?"

"Just a delinquent ~"

"What about Kurosu-sensei?"

"He's from the << **Military** >>."

"..... hey wait, somehow, don't you have a better grasp of information than me?"

"Is that so? Well I suppose. I'm pretty smart you see."

She purposely said that with an idiotic tone, followed by a cackle.

And then from behind Taito,

"As for me, I don't recognize you as a member though."

It was Gekkou's voice. Following that, Gekkou entered the room and glowered at Izumi.

"I shall erase your memory."

As he said that, Izumi shrugged her shoulders.

"Well well president. I'm pretty handy around so take me in and use me, I say."

"Why would I need a mere human?"

"Even though you yourself is also only a sword-wielding human."

"I'm a genius."

"Hehhh. Then shall we decide this with the end-of-terms that are starting today? I'm probably smarter though."

"Hah. Fool."

"Even though I have never been serious, but solving university entrance examination problems is not a problem to me, you know?"

"....."

"Well, since Mr Student Council President had been busy with studying magic and it's been tough on you I'd say, but with regards to academic studies, I think I'll win though ~"

"....."

"Well, this was what Sensei told me. Can you come help me instruct those student council members who just keep on accumulating red marks?"

At those words, Taito reacted.

"Ah, regarding that, I'm really vexed; if I take the test now, I will get a red mark for sure."

And Izumi laughed.

"Orh, one person just became my comrade."

As she said that, Gekkou scowled,

"..... I don't recognize....."

And he was interrupted.

"Even if you don't recognize it, I'm still entering the student council, so get over it already. I'll surely be useful you know? Since I'm super good at handling documents and stuff, make me the secretary."

Even though Gekkou had a look of extreme displeasure, he did not forcefully retort at what Izumi said.

It seemed like before Taito knew it, somehow, the circumstances concerning the student council room had undergone a large change, and the teacher called Kurosu appeared to have the most power.

In any case, he would have to ask for the details another time, since right now, the greatest problem would be,

"Hey Gekkou. I didn't really study all this while, so can I be exempted from the end-of-terms?"

As he asked, the student council president turned around and glared at him,

"If you have studied, then there wouldn't be a need for this short-skirt brainless girl to join the student council."

"Said the student council president who loses to the brainless girl in the tests."

"I definitely won't lose."

"Then let's have a match. If I win, treat me to some juice."

"Fine. If you lose, get out of the student council and drop out of the school."

"Hey woah ~, what an unfair set of conditions. But ok ~. Then, let's get back to our classrooms. The Math test will be starting soon."

"Show me what you can do."

"Hehehe, this is scary ~"

And with that, both of them walked out of the student council room.

As Taito looked at their departing figures,

"As, as I was saying, what about my end-of-terms....."

As he said that, *kyaa kyaa*, the delighted voices of some girls could be heard from behind him. As he turned around, he could see Mirai and Himea running towards him.

"Ah, Taito."

Said Himea.

And following that,

"Orh - long time no see, Immortal-kun. Do you also want to join us in tag?"

Said Mirai, and in response to that,

"How about the end-of-terms?"

He asked, and Mirai tilted her head.

"What's that?"

Following that, Himea started,

"Eh, Kimatsu is a hallucination drink for demons, Mirai-chan, you don't know?"

Kimatsu: Kimatsu means "End-Of-Term" in Japanese. Himea is making up something with that word.

"Hallucination drink? What's that what's that? Is it delicious?"

Himea smiled kindly,

"I shall educate you properly ~. It's something that you should not drink so forget what I just said."

"Eehhhhh ~, my curiosity is piqued ~"

On hearing that kind of conversation that was totally irrelevant to the human world,

"..... am I the only one concerned with the end-of-terms?"

He groaned.

At that moment, the school chime sounded. It was the signal for the start of the first period.

"Woah, crap. If I can't get exemption from the test, I have to sit for it or I'm gonna get held back for a year."

Taito said frantically. Besides having studied hardly anything at all, during the past three weeks, since he did not even attend any of the classes, he didn't feel like he could score much in the tests.

"..... at least I have to write my name."

And he started running down the corridor.

And he caught up with Gekkou and Izumi,

"Don't you guys need to hurry? The tests have started you know?"

On hearing that, both of them replied.

"To finish a test meant for small fries, I only need five minutes."

"Then I'll need only four minutes."

"Three minutes!"

"0.01 second!"

"What!? I've decided that I shall kill you."

"Ah haha~"

Hearing that exchange, Taito said.

"I'm the only who wants to kill the both of you!"

And he ran.

He ran to take the end-of-terms.

Somehow, just recently.

When Haruka was abducted, every single day, he had felt like he could kill someone, and had never thought that he would be able to return to the days of ordinary fretting like what happened just a while ago, but the fact was he did.

His lips drew back a little into a smile. Even though he was in danger of being held back for a year, he smiled.

And he thought.

The same thing could happen again.

The same type of incident could happen once again.

But before that, he would become stronger. Becoming smarter, stronger, and in order not to let something like what had happened this time round - when he was hollering pathetically about how he would have everything fall into his hands - repeat, he would work harder, he thought.

"..... that goes for academic studies as well, I guess."

He muttered.

The school only echoed back silence.

The sounds of the students' pencils writing away could be heard.

When he got back to the classroom, the test had already started.

Haruka signaled to him to hurry up. He waved back and returned to his desk. And began his test. Of course, he could hardly understand a thing. *Well, let me just write down my name for now*, he thought and then looked up.

Looking around the classroom, and finally settling his eyes on Haruka.

She too looked back at him.

While she should really busy herself with answering the questions on her paper, she looked at him instead. And softly, faintly, at the level that was barely audible to Taito, she said.

"..... you know, Taito."

"Hn?"

"I love you. That's why I won't hand you over to that witch."

She said all of a sudden.

Taito's eyes widened in response to that.

"Wait..... your memories....."

As he started, the homeroom teacher Kariya said.

"Oiy, don't talk among yourselves. I'll take that as cheating get it."

Taito fell silent on hearing that.

Haruka smiled. She smiled delightedly. With her usual tranquil and gentle face. And once again, her mechanical pencil starting running along the answer sheet.

As he looked at her, *this has somehow become something serious*, he thought.

It seemed like the question had not really been answered. Why did she know about Himea, and what was she protecting him from, the question with regards to that had not really been answered.

However, even so.

"....."

Even so, *let's leave that for now*, Taito thought.

More problematic things would definitely happen again. Such as the appearance of demons, << **Tenma** >>, monsters, and at the end a boy-girl-relationship related carnage, somehow, it seemed like he might possibly experience the woes of being an adult just in his first year of high school, but well,

"....."

As long as everyone is alive and well and are able to return to this school, everything is fine.

He thought. Since he couldn't answer any of the questions in the test, he looked up, and looked out of the window.

The weather was good.

Bright sky.

Classroom.

Desk.

Blackboard.

As languidly ordinary as it seemed, in the end, there was only three years to his high school life. Then, with regards to this peaceful, ordinary moment,

"....."

Taito thought that he would treasure it a little more.

♦

♦

♦

The location was still the same.

The time was also around the same.

In the student council room of Miyasaka High.

In the room where no one else was around, Kurosu was talking on his cell.

The person whom he was talking to was an elder of the << **Church** >>. That elder said.

*"The agreement was different. We have paid the << **Military** >> money. But yet, different from what we've agreed on, Saitohimea had escaped."*

"Yeah, she did, didn't she? But we didn't lend her a hand though."

"Don't shit with me. Currently, isn't that witch at your place?"

"She came back on her own you know."

*"Would you hand her over to us? You of all people, should know what happens to those who can't keep their agreements with the << **Church** >>....."*

"I know that. But I can't do anything about it"

"Bastard....."

"Hey Elder. Do you also know who you are talking to right now? It's the << **Military** >>, you know. The << **Military** >> who has been on bad terms with the << **Church** >> since the old days, you know. You're angry because we broke our agreement? Ahhaha. Then, come attack us now. If you don't have the balls to attack us, go cry yourself to sleep. We're not playing house here. Blame your own stupidity in paying us."

"..... I won't forget this humiliation."

"I have never forgotten right from the beginning. My organization has been on bad terms with your organization. That's all there is to it. If that's all, I'm going to hang up..... ah, you've already hung up it seems."

As he said that, Kurosu snapped his cellphone shut.

And then he smiled. And looked around the room that has not changed since the old days,

"I'm back, . << Holy Ground >> Aren't you blessed and having fun with your new master and the new student council executives? Even though I guess you could no longer see the adult me right now..... after having made a contract with Gekkou-kun....."

With that, he walked forward, and stroked the wall affectionately,

"But, it'll be alright. I'll get everything done for you. I'll get rid of the despair. And I shall complete the << **Bliss** >> magic that I've begun. And almost all the tools I need have been assembled."

He smiled.

And that would be the moon, the witch, and the crow.

The only thing that's left would be the dark rabbit, but that would take a little more time.

But there was no need to hurry.

Since everything had been moving according to plan.

That was why he smiled as he stroked the wall gently.

"Just a little bit more, just a little longer..... you would have to continue playing with the student council president instead of me for just a little longer."

Said Kurosu ---

Said << Military >> softly.

Afterword

And so, this is "Itsuten".

With this volume, finally, I think it matches what has been described as a school reverse fantasy, so how was it?

As I was digesting the story and the characters inside of me, as the feeling of 'this really feels good' or 'this is great', all of a sudden, the rumored Immortal (Fujimi) Shobou had a meeting going on.

> **Immortal (Fujimi):** Fujimi and the word 'immortal' are pronounced in the same way

This was the name of that meeting.

"Kagami that bastard wrote a damn thick novel! Will that be ok! Will people read such a thick book? We're really trembling" meeting.

So, after reading this, how was it, was it better to have split it into two volumes? Or was it better to have everything come with a big bang? It turned out to be the question of which would be kinder to your wallets and in the end, the conclusion was, "Alright I got it. Let's fight it out and let our souls burn!", that's what it became.

In reality, this book had enough content to split into two volumes. This is something you can hit someone with and cause it to turn out into a major incident.

But yet, the price!

Super worth it!

"....."

Yeah right, erm, with everyone trembling, please cheer me on.

Well, that's it for the jokes (half of them weren't really jokes though), this volume really turned out satisfactory, to me, it was really a good thing. We won't split it, that's the outcome of the fight from the editorial department and I was pleased. What's left is for everyone to enjoy it, that'll be the best!

So, well, to explain the contents of this book, please read it.

The truth is, the Dragon Magazine that's going on sale at the same time as this book has "Itsuten" as its cover!

That's really early! It has only been a year since the series started!

On top of that, though I'm not sure whether it's ok to write this but,

The comic adaptation in Monthly Dragon Age has been decided (details in Dragon Magazine).

There's going to be a drama CD! (details in Dragon Magazine).

Well.

Things are moving fast!

It's really thanks to you readers. Well, the cover of Doramaga previously was you know, 'it's the new work of Kagami Takaya, the author of Denyuuden~!', something pushy like that, which could only be used one time, and without those who love "Itsuten", it will never return to being on the cover. I was thinking what I should do if it became a piece of anticlimatic work that doesn't sell, thank god. Thank heavens, really.

The Immortal (Fujimi) editor-in-chief and my editor-in-charge as well,

"My --- it's great we didn't die. If it didn't sell, the three of us would carry a piece of concrete each and do a winter jump into the Tsugaru Strait."

"Hey, we are supposed to do a winter jump into the Tsugaru Strait if things don't sell in Immortal (Fujimi)!?"

"Of course. Who do you think we are?"

"Well, a normal publishing company?"

"....."

"Eh? It's not?"

"....."

"What's with that silence!? Wait, what kind of conversation is this!?"

Well, such a stupid conversation did not take place of course, but it's true that everyone was shaking in fear.

But, it's great that the unknown term, 'winter jump' was not implemented. This is also thanks to the support from everyone and it's kind of long if I write it out, so I'll just end with, thank you.

And so, the Doramaga that is going on sale at the same time, special write up & cover & 70 pages of original novel script & comic adaptation & drama CD, this can be said to be a information parade of "Itsuten". Please also support all of them.

And there's still one more thing.

Another of my series.

Planning on a game for "Densetsu no Yuusha no Densetsu" is ongoing! I think. It's going to become a game!?

Somehow, while "Itsuten" is getting fired up, "Denyuuden" is also getting fired up, erm, what's this?

Is this festival-like thing that? I'm going to die? Even though I know that the amount of work is going to kill me, anyway for now, I'm happy to be

able to write about this news that should make everyone pleased. I'll continue work hard even if it kills me, so please support me!

So after writing all that, the pages are more or less used up, as for the next book, when is it again, Editor?

"Yes! In the next month, we have "Dai Densetsu no Yuusha no Densetsu 6"!"

"After that?"

"Following month will be "Itsuka Tenma no Kuro Usagi 5"."

"Huh, huh, isn't that strange? This book is "Itsuten" 4 right, and we already have 5....."

"And then, in the month after next, we'll have "Ochita Kuroi Yuusha no....."."

"Wait a minuteeee. Doesn't that make it a 4-month consecutive release....."

"Sssshhhhh! Kagami-san, that's a secret from Kagami-san, so don't say it out too loudly! What if Kagami-san hears about it ☆."

"....."

For some reason, my editor said something really incredible, anyway, everyone, I'll be in your care.

Now now, we shall meet again next month in my new release!"

Ah, since Doramaga has tons of information, please support it as well. "Itsuten" will also be participating in the card game called Project Revolution, and it seems like the supplement has come so please, by all means.

Well, since there has been a lot, I too don't have a complete grasp of what kind of development will "Itsuten" and "Denyuuden" have, so buy Doramaga. And then send in the questionnaire to Kagami Takaya (LOL).

Well well, see you again, in next month's Doramaga ~.

Kagami Takaya's HP: http://www.kagamitakaya.com/

Kagami Takaya